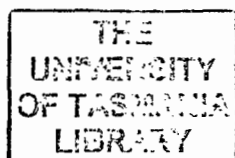


GENDERED AND ETHNICISED NATIONAL IDENTITIES IN AUSTRALIA AND  
JAPAN

by

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
University of Tasmania, 11 July, 2002



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## ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I examine the construction of gendered and ethnicised national identities in Australia and Japan. I conceptualise national identities as discourses of national belonging, discourses which are actively negotiated and ever-shifting. Specifically, I examine authorised, mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity in these two national settings. I draw my data from the following: Australian and Japanese state and academic publications; a sample of television advertisements in Australia and Japan; and focus groups and in-depth interviews with participants in two communities, 'Plainsview,' Tasmania and 'Hirogawa,' Hokkaido.

I pursue three main objectives in the thesis: I examine the ways national identities are constituted in authorised discourses, the mass media and face-to-face interactions in Australia and Japan; I examine the way discourses of national identity reflect, reinforce and challenge current power relations in Australia and Japan; and I examine the place of globalisation in Australian and Japanese constructions of national identity.

I argue that authorised, mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan are imbricated in complex ways. Widely circulating discourses of national identity are not imposed on the masses in a top-down fashion, but are the product of active negotiations of meaning. Neither do such discourses go uncontested. I demonstrate that individuals in a variety of social locations challenge dominant discourses of national identity and construct counter-narratives of nation.

Furthermore, I argue that discourses of national identity which marginalise women and ethnic Others in Australia and Japan, both mirror and help sustain the continued subordination of these social groups. At the same time, counter-narratives of nation constructed by Australians and Japanese both reflect and contribute to the changing status of marginalised groups in these two settings.

Finally, I critique the notion that globalising political, economic and other social changes are destabilising national identities and rendering them less salient. Evidence presented in the thesis suggests that globalised social conditions are conducive to the generation of gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan.



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## CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

In this thesis I examine the complex linkages between gender, ethnicity and national identity in Australia and Japan. I analyse empirical data from two similar municipalities, ‘Plainsview,’ Tasmania and ‘Hirogawa,’ Hokkaido<sup>1</sup> to draw conclusions about the ways national identities are constituted; the ways they reflect, reinforce and challenge the marginalisation of women and ethnic minorities in Australia and Japan; and the place of globalising social processes in recent constructions of Australian and Japanese national identities.

### Setting the Scene

My arrival in Hirogawa in December, 1997 coincided with Hokkaido’s first snowfall of the season. Ms. Honda and I settled into the second-floor sitting room of her brother’s house. The walls were bright with sunlight reflecting off the snow below. Steaming mugs of coffee sat on the low table between us. Ms. Honda said she preferred Hawaiian coffee to Japanese green tea.

I asked her about her new teaching post, about her recent trip overseas, about Japanese internationalisation. Then I asked her to tell me about Japanese national identity. ‘Japan, the “monoracial” nation,’ she answered, a hint of irony in her voice.

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<sup>1</sup> Names of the communities and individuals involved in the study have been changed to protect the anonymity of research participants. To be consistent with both cultural practice and my fieldwork practice, I refer to Australian participants by first names and Japanese participants by surnames. All Japanese men are given the title ‘Mr.’ and all women the title ‘Ms.’ regardless of social or marital status, a practice which most closely resembles the Japanese use of ‘*san*.’ Also consistent with cultural practice, where both Japanese surname and personal name are used, the surname appears first, except where the Western name order is used by a cited author.

Throughout the thesis, I use a modified Hepburn system of Romanisation. That is, in place of diacritics to lengthen vowels, vowels are ‘doubled’ to indicate lengthening (cf. Hamabata 1990). To illustrate, a lengthened ‘o’ is notated as ‘oo,’ a lengthened ‘i’ as ‘ii,’ and so on. There are two exceptions to this. First, I do not indicate lengthened vowels for words that have standardised English spellings, such as ‘Kyoto’ or ‘sumo.’ Secondly, where a different spelling convention has been used by a cited Japanese author, I adopt the spelling used in the original publication.

‘I’m a little different from other Japanese, because I don’t have the fantasy that Japan is a monoracial nation. . . . I think it’s not monoracial because I read a book about it when I was a university student, and also I have Korean-Japanese friends.’

Contrary to popular belief, she continued, the Japanese are not somehow racially ‘pure;’ rather, they just happen to share a common language, common customs and common religious beliefs. Furthermore, she observed, even those things are changing to such an extent that she questioned whether she could even talk about a unified Japanese national identity.

A long time ago, in my grandmother’s generation, there was a Japanese identity. . . . People in the same community had very similar values. . . . I think the kind of Japanese ethnic consciousness people used to have in common is now fading . . . so I think the national identity of the Japanese is in a shaky state.

Eight months later and 9,500 kilometres away, I sat in a sparsely furnished high school classroom in Plainsview, Tasmania. Roger Hardy, a career educator, explained that he had lived his whole life in Tasmania. He spoke of his attachment to the land and his involvement in the activities of his tight-knit community. I asked him to tell me about Australian national identity.

Well, it’s a very hard thing to put a finger on, in a way. . . . To an extent, it’s the stereotypical ideas that come out. And very often they seem to be sort of like the male stereotype Australian rather than anyone having sort of a stereotype of a female Australian. And so it’s some ideas about the beer drinking and that sort of very gregarious type character, or the outback-type image, or the sun-bronzed beach life-saver-type of image . . . the beer-drinking, sort of mateship type . . . or, perhaps, the outback-type image, which is very much fostered through the media.

The comments of these two research participants cast light on the central concerns of this thesis.<sup>2</sup> These concerns are summarised in the three guiding research questions below.

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<sup>2</sup> Throughout the thesis, I use the term research ‘participants,’ rather than ‘subjects’ or ‘respondents,’ to highlight their active contribution to the research process.

## Research Questions

### *How are gendered and ethnicised national identities constituted?*

In the excerpts above, Ms. Honda suggested that her notions of Japanese national identity come from two principal sources: a text she read as a university student, and her own personal experiences. Roger observed that the most widely circulating notions of Australian national identity are those constructed in the mass media. The question is how these scholarly writings, personal experiences and mass mediated texts coalesce into something people experience as ‘national identities.’ My first research question, therefore, is *how are national identities constituted?*

To date, comprehensive definitions of ‘national identity’ have been lacking in the social scientific literature. Vague or contradictory usage of the term leaves the reader with the impression that ‘national identity,’ ‘nationalism’ and even ‘nationality’ are one and the same. Yet these are distinct concepts, the conflation of which has rendered many discussions of national identity nebulous and untenable. In this thesis I provide both a detailed conceptual framework for the discussion of national identity and the empirical evidence to support this conceptualisation.

I conceptualise national identities as discourses, or sets of interconnected discourses, of national belonging. These discourses are actively negotiated, constantly in flux, and imbricated; and they both shape and are shaped by individual experiences and institutional arrangements. Since discourses are, by definition, mutually constructed, ‘negotiated discourse’ is admittedly redundant. However, I use the terms ‘negotiated’ and ‘negotiation’ throughout the thesis to stress this mutuality, and to avoid implying that discourses are top-down constructs, imposed on the masses by calculating elites. I do not wish to overemphasise intentionality, however. Discourses are mutually constructed through the exchange of symbols, but this is not necessarily done with specific outcomes in mind.

I focus here on authorised, mass mediated, and folk discourses of national identity. First, I analyse *authorised discourses of national identity*, which consist of the following:



state constructions of national identity, primarily in the form of government publications; and scholarly explications of national identity, the bodies of social scientific literature which inform my research, and to which this thesis itself contributes. Next, in my analysis of *mass mediated discourses of national identity*, I focus primarily on Australian and Japanese television advertisements. Finally, I examine those narratives of nation constructed by research participants in Australian and Japanese interviews and focus groups; I conceptualise these as *folk discourses of national identity*. Although there is considerable overlap between these discourses, I address each in its turn, because each represents a significant site of the negotiation of national identity.

*How do discourses of national identity reflect, reinforce and challenge current social hierarchies based on gender and ethnicity?*

The interview excerpts above suggest that discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan are profoundly gendered and ethnicised. Roger described the (stereo)typical Australian as a sun-bronzed ('white') male, a beer-drinker, an outdoorsman, a 'mate.' Likewise, at the first mention of Japanese national identity, Ms. Honda evoked the popular notion of Japanese racial and cultural homogeneity, 'Japan, the "monoracial" nation.' Evidence presented in this thesis suggests that such widely circulating images of national identity in Australia and Japan, both reflect and reinforce the marginalisation of women and ethnic minorities in these two settings. However, the fact that Roger, Ms. Honda and many other participants critique and remake such gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity suggests that narratives of nation are also used to challenge current social hierarchies.

This thesis is not the first study to explore the relationship between gender, ethnicity and national identity. Feminist and post-colonialist scholars have examined gendered and ethnicised narratives of nation in diverse national contexts.<sup>3</sup> However, such analyses typically rely heavily on the deconstruction of textual material, and often fail to

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<sup>3</sup> See for instance, De Groot (1993), Dixon (1976), Kapferer (1996), Lake (1986), Magarey et al. (1993), McClintock (1993), Radcliffe (1999), Radhakrishnan (1992), Summers (1975), and Willis (1993).

account for the individuals, institutions and processes that shape the production and consumption of these texts. In this thesis I examine not only the content of discourses of national identity, but also discursive processes: the ways Australians and Japanese interpret, contest and reshape such discourses, and employ them in explanations of their own locations within the national community.

I argue here that those widely circulating discourses of national identity that symbolically marginalise women and ethnic minorities naturalise and help sustain the subordination of these groups. However, I also assert that alternative constructions of national identity both reflect and contribute to the changing status of women and ethnic minorities. Symbolic and material processes are inextricably linked.

*What is the place of globalising social changes in recent constructions of national identity in Australia and Japan?*

‘I think the kind of Japanese ethnic consciousness people used to have in common is now fading . . . so I think the national identity of the Japanese is in a shaky state’ [Ms. Honda]. Ms. Honda suggested that recent social changes in Japan have destabilised and hollowed out Japanese national identity. Likewise, some globalisation theorists suggest that with increasingly global flows of people, commodities and ideas, nations and national identities are losing their relevance.<sup>4</sup> These theorists argue that under conditions of globalisation, national-level ‘imagined communities’ (Anderson 1983) start to give way to sub-national and supra-national social cleavages based not so much on geo-political boundaries as on identity politics, consumption practices, and issues such as human rights or the environment.

Although in much of the social scientific literature such identity transformations are assumed to be a key part of globalisation, few researchers have attempted to chart such transformations of national identity in individuals’ lived experiences. Furthermore, such theorisations are premised on an overly stabilised notion of identity. In this thesis I empirically examine the ways Australian and Japanese research participants experience and understand globalisation, and I analyse the ways their experiences of globalising

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<sup>4</sup> See detailed discussion in Chapter Three.

social changes inform their constructions of gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity.

### Significance of the Research

In this thesis I make both theoretical and empirical contributions to the field. I offer a detailed conceptualisation of national identity, and examine ways national identities are constituted through complex, competing and overlapping discourses. I argue that these discourses have profound material consequences, and yet are demonstrably malleable, subject to contestation and revision. In my exploration of ways Australian and Japanese participants negotiate the conflicting possibilities of their constantly reinvented national identities, I demonstrate that the *processes* of discourse are of equal importance to the *products* of discourse. That is, the analysis of the kinds of finished texts generally scrutinised by scholars of national identity (novels, political speeches or official histories, for example) reveals only a partial understanding of discourses of national identity. A fuller understanding is derived from an analysis of the ways people assemble and make sense of discourses of national identity in relation to their own lives.

Throughout the thesis I provide a detailed account of the gendering and ethnicisation of folk, mass mediated, and authorised discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan. I show that these discursive patterns are grounded in national specificities (economic, political, cultural and historical); and yet the commonalities that emerge provide a fuller understanding of discourses of national identity more generally. While the specific content of discourses of national identity differs from Australia to Japan, I argue here that in both national settings such discourses both legitimate and pose challenges to the privilege of dominant groups and the subordination of marginalised groups.

Through evidence presented in the thesis, I challenge the notion that national identities are losing their salience in the context of globalisation. Because globalisation theory, to date, has largely neglected to substantiate empirically its claims of waning

national identities, I analyse empirical data in order to gauge the salience of discourses of national identity among Australian and Japanese participants. Furthermore, because globalisation theory has been premised on putatively universal, although often implicitly ‘Western,’ processes and populations, I examine the applicability of such theories to a ‘non-Western’ context.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, as I maintain throughout the thesis, national identities are discourses that shape and are shaped by individual and institutional actions. For this reason, I empirically examine both the content of discourses and discursive processes. I combine an engaged reading of Australian and Japanese state and academic discourses of national identity with the content analysis of Australian and Japanese television advertisements, the results of audience response surveys, and the analysis of in-depth interviews and focus groups with Australian and Japanese participants. In so doing, I present a wealth of empirical data to support the claims of the thesis.

### Thesis Overview

Thus far, I have summarised the key concerns of the thesis and previewed its theoretical and empirical contributions to the field. In Chapter Two I outline the basic parameters of the research project. I begin by explicating two key concepts: discourse and national identity. I then present my research methodology, and conclude with a description of the Australian and Japanese municipalities I studied, and the people who participated in the research. In Chapter Three I undertake an engaged literature review. It is ‘engaged’ in that it is structured not simply to situate the thesis within the existing social scientific literature, but also to examine the ways my engagement with academic and state discourses has shaped my approach to the research project, and to highlight the ways the thesis contributes to and challenges such discourses. In addition, the chapter serves as an empirical point of reference for subsequent chapters in which I examine evidence of

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<sup>5</sup> The categories of ‘East’ and ‘West’ are heavily laden and conceptually unsatisfactory signs. Nonetheless, for the lack of more precise terminology, in this thesis I use the terms in ways that are consistent with current usage in Australia, in Japan, and in the international academic community.

complex linkages between these authorised discourses and mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity.

In Chapter Four I analyse mass mediated discourses of national identity. Because mass mediated texts are a particularly rich source of discourses of national identity, the analysis of such texts provides a window onto gendered and ethnicised narratives of nation. In the first part of the chapter, I present a content analysis of Australian and Japanese television advertisements, coding for representations of gender, ethnicity and national identity. In the second part of the chapter, I examine audience responses to these representations.

In Chapters Five and Six I analyse transcripts from focus group discussions and in-depth interviews in Australia and Japan to trace the contours of gendered and ethnicised national identity in these nations. Furthermore, I explore the ways participants embrace, reject, revise and negotiate discourses of national identity, and use them in the process of interpreting their social worlds.

In Chapter Seven I draw on interview and focus-group data to examine participants' understandings of and responses to globalisation, principally in the form of Australian multiculturalism and Japanese internationalisation. I then analyse the place of such experiences of globalisation in participants' constructions of gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan.

In Chapter Eight I recapitulate the key findings of the thesis and draw together the diverse theoretical issues and empirical evidence presented in the previous chapters. I conclude with a discussion of the ways the thesis contributes to a fuller understanding of national identities in Australia, Japan and beyond.

## CHAPTER TWO RESEARCH APPROACH

In my methodological approach, I start from the position that the social world is collectively constructed, interpreted and experienced by individuals through their creation and use of systems of signs. While spoken and written language is the semiotic system which has received more attention from social scientists than any other, systems of signification include, for instance, non-linguistic visual representations, ‘body language,’ and the richly stylised signifiatory codes of advertising, a key focus of this study.

Accepting that the social world is constituted, in part, through the exchange of signs, I attempt to understand social phenomena by analysing both the ways individuals negotiate meaning, and the contexts in which such negotiations take place. Throughout this thesis, therefore, my primary units of analysis are the discourses and discursive practices through which individuals, from intellectuals, politicians and advertisers to non-elite Australians and Japanese, constitute and interpret their social world.

### Key Concepts

A central premise of this thesis is that national identities are negotiated discourses. I begin, therefore, with an explication of two key concepts: discourse (particularly in relation to power and ideology); and national identity.

#### *Understanding discourse, power and ideology*

In its broadest sense, a discourse is both a *product*—a complex collection of verbal, visual or other symbolic units used to order the world in some way—and a *process*—the active production and interpretation of such symbolic orderings. However, discourses are not simply ways of representing or symbolically ordering the world; discourses are, to borrow Bourdieu’s terminology, both ‘structured and structuring’ (Bourdieu 1992); they both reflect and construct social reality; and they are ‘lived,’ that is, enacted in and

through material processes and social institutions. In my approach to discourse, I borrow principally from semiotics and from Foucauldian theory.

I start with a distinction between contextually-specific discursive exchanges between individuals and more widely circulating and less context-dependent discourses. The difference between the two is closely analogous to Saussure's distinction between *parole* and *langue* (Saussure 1959). The former is a concrete communicative act, by a specific individual in a specific time and space. The latter is the totality of the linguistic system within which each concrete communicative act is located. In other words, each instance of *parole* is but a single point of light in the linguistic universe of *langue*. Likewise, I make a distinction between specific *articulations* of national identity and more widely circulating, less context-dependent *discourses* of national identity. The former include, in the case of this thesis, specific statements made by research participants, specific television advertisements, specific government documents, and specific scholarly writings, while the latter consist of the whole universe of symbols of national identity. In this thesis I analyse specific articulations of national identity to understand the ways they shape and are shaped by more widely circulating discourses of national identity and the material conditions within which they are generated.

These discourses and discursive practices are significant because, as Foucauldian theory suggests, individuals and social collectivities are constituted within and through discourses, and are inscribed with (and in turn reinscribe) power relations. Power structures, therefore, are maintained not through the direct intervention of influential elites, but through the discursive process itself, the repetition and naturalisation of power/knowledge.<sup>6</sup>

In other words, widely circulating discourses serve a 'double function:' in Barthes' words, they 'hail us,' they call our attention to something; and in so doing, they 'establish' something, they make it so (Barthes 1972: 117-125).<sup>7</sup> However, I do not wish

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<sup>6</sup> See Weedon (1996) for an examination of Foucauldian approaches to discourse.

<sup>7</sup> While Barthes discusses this 'double function' in relation to myth, it is equally applicable to discourses of national identity. Barthes himself discusses in detail mythic discourses of 'Frenchness' and 'French imperialism.'

to imply that individuals are powerless in this process, that individual actions are somehow determined by discourses. Rather, through specific articulations, individuals and institutions subtly reshape larger discourses, just as the vocabulary and grammar that constitute *langue* are changed over time.

The malleability of these discourses does not render them less ideologically powerful, however. Because both 'ideology' and 'power' are defined in a variety of ways in the social sciences, I offer my own explication of these concepts here. Drawing on Foucault, I conceive of power as a 'mode of action upon the action of others' (Rabinow 1984: 221). Power is not an object that is possessed by an individual or institution; rather, it is enacted, it is the effect of one's actions. This is not to deny, however, that certain individuals and institutions, by virtue of their social location, are more readily able to enact power. Foucault suggests that when the free flow of power relations stagnate, reciprocal relations are no longer possible. This results in the emergence of relations of domination (Rabinow 1984: 103).

The maintenance of relations of domination is accomplished, in part, through ideology. The term 'ideology' has been used to mean one, or some combination, of the following: a worldview; a system of ideas/practices which maintains social inequalities; and/or a distorted understanding of the world, or 'false consciousness.'<sup>8</sup> For the purposes of this thesis, I conceptualise ideology as encompassing the first two of these usages: an ideology is a way of thinking about (and acting in) the world, which is widely understood to be 'natural,' neutral and commonsensical, but which, in fact, is located within relations of power and functions to reproduce those power relations. I do not draw on 'false consciousness' theories, because their emphasis on the imposition of ideologies on the masses by calculating elites is incompatible with my understanding that discourses of national identity are constructed (and constantly reconstructed) by diverse elite and non-elite agents.

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<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Althusser (1968), Fowler (1985), and Marx (1977).



The concepts of ideology, power and discourse are usefully stitched together under a fourth concept, hegemony.<sup>9</sup> I conceptualise hegemony as modes of thought/action which are characterised by the following: they are dominant in a particular culture at a particular point in time; they reflect the interests of dominant social groups, but only imperfectly (that is, dominant groups can and do attempt to impose their thought/actions from the top down, but this is never, and can never be, unproblematically successful); and they are maintained in part through material domination and in part through a loose consensus. Hegemony, as I conceptualise it, is not static, once-and-for-all ideological domination; it is malleable and processual. It is not generated by or around a single centre, but is shaped by diverse and competing interests. Nonetheless, hegemony constrains discourse by establishing the terms of reference for debate.

In sum, hegemonic discourses of national identity are infused with, and enact, ideology. Thus, these discourses may be used in the exercise of power to maintain relations of domination. However, this does not preclude the possibility of discourses that challenge relations of domination. As Foucault argued, discourses generate the means of their own critique, just as all forms of power generate their own forms of resistance (Rabinow 1984). Empirical evidence in this thesis demonstrates that elites and non-elites alike frequently read against the grain of hegemonic discourses. That is, they render explicit the ideologies implicit in dominant discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan; they critique those discourses; and frequently construct alternate discourses, or what Bhabha (1990) calls ‘counter-narratives of nation.’ Bhabha argues that counter-narratives of nation, ‘continually evoke and erase its totalising boundaries—both actual and conceptual—[and] disturb those ideological manoeuvres through which “imagined communities” are given essentialist identities’ (1990: 300).

My adoption of the term ‘counter-narrative’ requires some clarification here. In my use of the term, counter-narratives are not ‘counter’ in the sense of having a unified whole against which they are positioned; neither are they ‘narratives’ in the sense of

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<sup>9</sup> I take my understanding of ‘hegemony’ from Gramsci (1971) and from Laclau and Mouffe’s (1985) post-Marxian re-reading of Gramsci’s work.

seamless, highly elaborated stories of national belonging. Rather, for the purposes of this thesis, counter-narratives encompass a diverse range of challenges to widely circulating discourses of national identity. These include, among others, participants' assertions that widely circulating discourses of national identity are inaccurate, anachronistic or exclusionary; assertions that such discourses have been constructed by elites to serve their own interests; assertions that these discourses are irrelevant to the participants' experiences; and both generalised expressions of discomfort with these widely circulating discourses, and more detailed stories of who, how and what the nation is.

### *National identities as negotiated discourses*

An emphasis on discourse is particularly appropriate for the study of national identities, which I understand as negotiated discourses of national belonging. With the rise of identity politics, neo-nationalism and Balkanisation,<sup>10</sup> recently the concept of national identity has been much discussed. Current literature on national identity suffers from two shortcomings, however. First, in the absence of rich and explicit definitions of the term, 'national identity' is often conflated with 'nationalism' and even 'nationality,' all related, yet distinct, concepts. The second shortcoming of the national identity literature is apparent confusion over the location of national identity. At one pole, national identity is understood as a kind of omnipresent national essence that exists in the very fabric of the nation's land, culture and people. At the other pole, national identity is conceptualised as an individual's affective ties to a (sometimes sub-national) social collectivity based on attributes such as shared ethnicity or shared territory. However, national identity can be neither essentialised nor individualised; for national identity is both the process and the product of negotiation.

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<sup>10</sup> Although the term 'Balkanisation' originally referred to the explicit nineteenth century British policy of fostering divisions amongst Balkan states and peoples in order to hold Russia, Turkey and Austria/Hungary in check, most contemporary commentators apply the term to any fragmentation of nation-states, whether deliberately encouraged or not.

### Understanding 'nation'

In working toward an understanding of national identity, it is first necessary to understand the concept of 'nation.' Greenfeld (1992: 4-9) has charted the semantic transformation of the term, which was first used by early Romans to mean a 'foreigner,' and later came to refer to 'a community of opinion,' 'a political, cultural and social elite,' and 'a sovereign people.' Later, as nation-states came to be associated with the ethnicity, ways of life, and other characteristics of their populations, 'nation' came to mean 'a unique sovereign people.' While the latter comes closest to popular understandings of 'nation' today, the term continues to be used variously to refer to sub-national ethnic groups, supranational religious communities, and other collectivities with limited or no political sovereignty.

Greenfeld's archaeology of the shifting and contested nature of 'nation' reveals that nations are more than simply geographical and political entities; they are discursive constructs. Anderson argues, in fact, that nations are 'imagined communities,' 'imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion' (1983: 15). In Anderson's much discussed thesis, so-called 'print capitalism' is central to the project of nation-building. He argues that early improvements in print technology led to the unification of national vernaculars, increased literacy and the rise of such early mass commodities as the newspaper and the popular novel, and thus opened up the possibility of national-level identifications. In other words, nations have been created, in part, through shared vernaculars, representational systems and texts: they have been created, in part, through discourse. Following this logic, I agree with Hall that, 'a nation is not only a political entity but something which produces meanings--a system of *cultural representation*' (Hall 1992: 292; emphasis in the original).<sup>11</sup>

Some writers have conceptualised national identity as a national mythology, a hegemonic body of stories that describe the birth of the nation, and explain and legitimate

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<sup>11</sup> Hall goes on to argue, however, that these systems of meaning are being challenged and fragmented as globalisation diversifies the national languages, cultures and institutions which unite, and in a sense create, nations.

contemporary socio-cultural conditions.<sup>12</sup> While I accept that discourses of national identity have such effects, in this thesis I do not use the term ‘mythology’ because ‘myth’ carries with it connotations of falsity and fantasy. Instead, I prefer Hall’s term, ‘narrative of nation,’ which he defines as ‘a set of stories, images, landscapes, scenarios, historical events, national symbols and rituals which stand for or represent the shared experiences, sorrows, and triumphs and disasters which give meaning to the nation’ (1992: 293).<sup>13</sup> In the current nation-state system, such narratives provide powerful contemporary symbols of collectivity. Just as religious faith inspires believers to give their lives in jihads or crusades, so faith in the narrative of nation inspires people to die in war to preserve the imagined national collective. Tales of wartime sacrifice and heroism are then incorporated into the very discourses of nation which inspired such acts, thus making national narratives, like many religious doctrines, self-perpetuating.

Just as nations are discursive constructs, ‘national identity’ is a negotiated discourse of national belonging. While ‘national identity’ is used throughout the thesis in an effort to be consistent with previous literature, it would be more appropriate to speak of ‘national-level identifications;’ for while the term ‘identity’ resonates with Enlightenment notions of a unified self with an unchanging essence or core, ‘identification’ highlights the negotiated, and highly changeable, nature of discourses of national belonging (see Hall 1992: 285-90).

National identity is in no sense immutable, but by its very nature is continually shifting. As Willis (1993: 29) has noted, discourses of national identity are sets of representations which are only rendered meaningful by participants in these discourses; and since participants themselves are in a constant state of flux, changing and being changed by current social conditions, so discourses of national identity are ever changing. It is crucial to acknowledge, however, that even as individuals shape widely circulating discourses of national identity, these discourses frequently serve to reinforce dominant

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<sup>12</sup> See, for instance, Kapferer (1996) and Willis (1993).

<sup>13</sup> Hall’s theoretical approach to national identity is compatible with my own. While I consider his ‘narrative of nation’ roughly synonymous with my ‘discourse of national identity,’ and use it accordingly, I prefer ‘discourse’ for its emphasis on mutual, and ever-shifting, constructions of meaning.

social norms by legitimating ideal types of individuals and actions. Such discourses are, in other words, both ‘structured and structuring;’ they reflect and reproduce unequal power relations.

Discourses of national identity are, inherently, practices of inclusion and exclusion; for stories of who ‘we’ are, are also stories of who ‘we’ are not. Such stories of nation frequently exclude not only those outside the nation, but also marginalised groups within the nation. So it is that ethnic Chinese are virtually invisible in Fijian discourses of national identity (Ewins 1998), the *Burakumin* (‘untouchables’) disappear from Japanese discourses of national identity (as I will demonstrate in this thesis), and women have been marginalised in Australian discourses of national identity (Summers 1975; Dixon 1976; Pettman 1988; Willis 1993). Exclusionary discursive practices mirror and help maintain the material disadvantage of marginalised groups, and contribute to the establishment and maintenance of social boundaries, boundaries between the imagined ‘us’ and the imagined ‘them.’

The question of the material effects of such discourses of nation leads logically to a discussion of nationalism. As noted above, in much of the social scientific literature, there is considerable conceptual slippage between ‘national identity’ and ‘nationalism.’<sup>14</sup> For my analytical purposes, however, the two are distinct: national identity consists of shared stories of membership in an ‘imagined community;’ nationalism is the practical mobilisation of national identity.<sup>15</sup>

National identity and nationalism are undeniably interrelated. Gellner (1983) suggests that the origins of both nations and nationalism can be traced to the demand for an increased division of labour under increasing industrialisation, a demand which could only be satisfied through centralised, standardised systems of communication and

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<sup>14</sup> This is not to imply that most other words have more stable, less contested, meanings, nor is it to imply that conceptual stability is desirable for its own sake. However, for analytical purposes, it is essential to explore the subtle differences between these two concepts.

<sup>15</sup> Hutchinson (1987) makes a useful distinction between civic nationalism, centred on the equal civic participation of all members of the nation state, and cultural nationalism, centred on the presumed cultural distinctiveness and homogeneity of the nation.

education. In standardising these systems, the state created institutions for the transmission and legitimation of an increasingly standardised national culture; and thus, strengthened the link between state and culture. The standardisation and centralisation of these systems both laid the foundations for national identity (by educating the citizenry with a standardised language and knowledge), and opened up the possibility of nationalism (by institutionalising the newly standardised national culture in the political and bureaucratic structures of the state).

Eventually the concept of 'nationality' became naturalised. Gellner notes, 'A man without a nation defies the recognised categories and provokes revulsion. . . . A man must have a nationality as he must have a nose and two ears' (1983: 6). In a similar vein, Anderson (1983: 14) argues that, 'In the modern world everyone can, should and will "have" a nationality, as he or she "has" a gender.' Both of these statements hint at the links between gender and nation. While Gellner suggests a naturalised tie between a man and his nation, leaving unanswered the question of whether women are bound to nation in this same way, Anderson draws a parallel between nationality and gender as two essential(ised) aspects of contemporary identity.<sup>16</sup>

This naturalisation of the notion of 'nationality' accounts, in part, for the conflation of 'nationality' and 'national identity.' However, individuals do not 'have' national identity in the way they 'have' a nationality. Throughout this thesis, nationality is understood as the legal status of citizenship which is granted to individuals by the state. Quite distinct from this, national identity consists of collectively constructed and shared discourses of belonging; it does not, and *cannot*, belong to any one individual or institution.

### Defining national identity

In sum, then, I define national identities as negotiated discourses, or sets of interconnected discourses, of national belonging. Such discourses are found in texts as

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<sup>16</sup> Neither Gellner nor Anderson explicitly examines gender in relation to nationalism or national identity, however.

diverse as political rallies (McClintock 1993), museum exhibits (Macdonald 1997), postcards (Willis 1993: 16-17), public monuments (Kapferer 1996: 200-226), television advertisements (Hogan 1999), government posters (Ang 1996), and even human bodies (Radcliffe 1999). Such texts draw on, and refigure, existing discourses of national identity, and in so doing they contribute to the on-going constitution of the national 'imagined community.' Far from being static, these discourses are constantly contested and reshaped, and there is constant interplay between authorised, mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity.

*Authorised, mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity*

National identity is articulated in a diverse range of social contexts including everyday conversations, mass mediated texts, political rhetoric and scholarly texts. The discourses constructed in such exchanges are imbricated and mutually constitutive. For analytical purposes, I have categorised the varied discourses of national identity into authorised discourses, mass mediated discourses and folk discourses.

By 'authorised discourses,' I mean those discourses of national identity generated by scholars and agents of the state. Such discourses are 'authorised' in the sense that they have institutional credentials behind them, and are frequently translated into official policy on such issues as immigration patterns, welfare policy, affirmative action programs, and tariff regulations. In addition to their wide ranging material effects, authorised discourses have widespread discursive effects. That is, as empirical evidence presented in this thesis demonstrates, authorised discourses frequently inform mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity. I do not wish to suggest that these authorised discourses *determine* individual articulations of national identity. However, as Chapters Four through Seven will demonstrate, the classificatory systems and terms of reference established in authorised discourses are, variously, reflected, reinforced and contested in both mass mediated texts and discussions of national identity among Australian and Japanese participants.

By mass mediated discourses of national identity, I simply refer to those discourses of national belonging prevalent in the mass media, that is in movies, novels, television programs, magazines, newspapers, internet sites, and advertisements, among others. For reasons detailed below, in this thesis I focus on Australian and Japanese television advertisements.

Mass mediated discourses of national identity have certain commonalities with authorised discourses. Certainly in information-rich societies such as Australia and Japan the mass media are an important site of the exercise of ideological power, and political and intellectual elites undoubtedly exert a degree of control over the mass media. I have treated mass mediated discourses and authorised discourses of national identity as analytically distinct, however, out of recognition of the different ways in which people encounter these discourses. On the one hand, it is difficult *not* to encounter mass mediated representations of national identity. In Australia and Japan they are ever present: on roadside billboards; in news broadcasts; and in the television advertisements that reach into lounge rooms across these nations. On the other hand, the details of most scholarly research and most state policies are not as readily apparent to those not directly concerned with producing, implementing or analysing them.

By 'folk' discourses of national identity, I refer to those discourses generated by members of the national community in the course of everyday interactions. In this thesis the folk discourses analysed consist of those articulations of national identity in interviews and focus groups with Australians and Japanese. As subsequent chapters will demonstrate, such discourses are by no means homogeneous, and their relationship to authorised and mass mediated discourses is both complex and unstable.

### Research Strategies

My research methodology can be broadly characterised as engaged, interpretivist-constructionist, and comparative. My primary methods of data collection and analysis have included the following: identifying and engaging with relevant state and academic



texts in Australia and Japan; collecting a sample of Australian and Japanese television advertisements and analysing the content of that sample; conducting and analysing focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with Australian and Japanese participants; and administering and analysing audience-response questionnaires. As detailed below, these research strategies have proven particularly appropriate for the investigation of discourses of national identity.

### *An engaged approach*

Because I examine in this thesis not only the production of gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity, but also the ways such discourses reflect, reinforce and challenge current social hierarchies, I have adopted certain perspectives and tools of critical theory. The aim of this engaged approach is to render explicit the links between discursive practices and the material consequences of such practices.

My approach has grown out of an interest in hierarchies of gender and ethnicity. By 'interest,' I mean not only an intellectual curiosity about such social hierarchies, but my personal stake, or 'vested interest,' in such hierarchies. My biography as a 'white' American-born woman, a naturalised Australian citizen, and, variously, a manual labourer, a teacher, a student and a researcher in both Australia and Japan, has compelled me both to understand and, to some extent, challenge these hierarchies. In my research approach I draw on principles of feminist research methodology (as elaborated, for instance, by Ramazanoglu 1989) which suggest that the production of social scientific knowledge is not incompatible with the political engagement of the researcher. I argue that by acknowledging the ways my own biography has shaped both the research process and the research product, I am able to provide a nuanced and intellectually honest account of the social phenomena under consideration. I agree with Glesne and Peshkin (1992: 104) that,

My subjectivity is the basis for the story that I am able to tell. It is a strength on which I build. It makes me who I am as a person and as a researcher, equipping me with the perspectives and insights that shape all that I do as a researcher, from the selection of the topic clear through to

the emphases I make in my writing. . . . Subjectivity is something to capitalise on rather than to exorcise.

A key tool in my engaged approach is the content analysis of mass mediated discourses of national identity in the form of television advertisements. In a project that seeks to examine discourses of national identity, advertisements are an obvious choice for analysis. Advertisements seek to persuade through their articulation of a society's core ideals. In Australia and Japan they are, in a sense, 'capitalist realist art' (Schudson 1984) in that they embody the values at the heart of such capitalist societies, chief among them, consumption itself. Just as socialist realist art constructed a vision not of contemporary social realities, but of a utopian socialist ideal, so advertisements provide the viewer with 'reality as it should be--life and lives worth emulating' (Schudson 1984: 220).

By constructing this 'reality as it should be,' advertisements provide models for identity formation, at the level of both the individual and the nation. At the same time, I am not asserting that audiences uncritically accept mass mediated images and build their identities around them. Critical theorists in the Frankfurt School tradition have long argued that advertisements, among other products of the so-called 'culture industry,' are created and used by capitalists in an attempt to mould docile workers and eager consumers and to obscure inequalities based on, for instance, class, gender and ethnicity.<sup>17</sup> While such a perspective goes some way toward revealing the power relations which shape discursive practices, it is limited in the following ways: it denies audience agency and the possibility of audience resistance; it elides viewer differences based in class, gender, ethnicity, sexual preference and so on; and it underestimates the mediating influences of other powerful social institutions.<sup>18</sup>

Recent theorists have challenged the usefulness of content analyses such as the one I undertake in Chapter Four. Hermes (1995: 10), for instance, argues that 'texts acquire meaning only in the interaction between readers and texts and . . . analysis of the

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<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Adorno and Horkheimer (1993), Bowlby (1985), Ewen (1976), Root (1984) and Williamson (1978).

<sup>18</sup> For feminist critiques of critical media theory, see Ang (1989), Brown (1989), Deming (1989) and Press (1989a, 1989b).

text on its own is never enough to reconstruct these meanings.’ I recognise the limitations of content analyses, particularly where the researcher’s reading of the text is idiosyncratic and fails to account for other possible readings as well as for the conditions of the text’s production and consumption. However, if Hermes’ argument is taken to its logical conclusion, all texts are rendered politically innocent; they become no more than Rorschach tests from which readers construct idiosyncratic meanings. This denies the social ramifications of demeaning and exploitative representations, and places responsibility for such representations on readers, who themselves may be the demeaned or exploited. I argue instead that texts, including advertisements, carry dominant meanings, which audiences may appropriate, resist, reject, or modify in a variety of ways.

From this position, analysis of both the content of texts and audience responses to those texts is necessary to an understanding of the complex relationship between mass mediated discourses and the power relations within which they are located and to which they contribute. For these reasons, in this thesis I combine content analysis with audience response research.

I have chosen to analyse television advertisements rather than print or radio advertisements for a number of reasons. Television is perhaps the most pervasive and invasive of the mass media. Its multi-sensory messages demand the audience’s attention in a way that other broadcast and print media cannot. Furthermore, unlike these other media whose messages are increasingly aimed at niche markets, television messages are directed toward a broader audience.<sup>19</sup> These messages, therefore, offer clues as to which values, experiences, and ways of life are assumed to be shared by the mass (usually national) target audience. Finally, while movies and magazines and other self-contained texts have beginnings and ends, television, on the other hand, consists of a never-ending flow of images. As Kaplan (1988: 136) writes,

The television is seductive precisely because it speaks to a desire that is insatiable--it promises complete knowledge in some far distant and never-to-be-experienced future; its strategy is to keep us endlessly consuming in

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<sup>19</sup> With the spread of cable and satellite television, this is changing; however, my sample of advertisements was taken only from free-to-air stations.

the hopes of fulfilling our desire; it hypnotises us through addressing this desire, keeps us returning for more.

By its very nature, this ever-shifting medium reveals the constant (re)construction of individual and collective identities, and provides fertile ground for discourses of national identity.

### *An interpretivist-constructionist approach*

Although the term ‘interpretivist-constructionist’ is somewhat cumbersome, I adopt it in order to emphasise that individuals both interpret and construct their social worlds. Because I understand national identity as a discourse, and because, as I have argued, discourses both reflect and constitute social reality, my primary interests in this thesis are the ways individuals in Australia and Japan negotiate understandings of national identity, and the ways such understandings are located within relations of power. In an attempt to reach a well-rounded understanding of how Australians and Japanese negotiate discourses of national identity and use them in the process of ordering their social worlds, I have combined focus group research with questionnaires and in-depth interviews.

The methodological strength of focus group discussions of national identity is that they reveal the negotiated nature and the dynamism of discourses of national identity. Focus group data presented in Chapters Five, Six and Seven reveal the ways participants construct, contest and revise understandings of national identity, at times consciously reflecting on the mutability of these shared discourses. While focus groups admittedly create a contrived social setting, controlled and monitored by the researcher, they nonetheless provide the researcher an opportunity to observe the active negotiation of discourses of national identity.

Because even focus group data provide, at best, only a partial understanding of discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan, I have also made use of questionnaire data to gauge audience responses to mass mediated discourses of national identity in these two countries. Questionnaires asking participants to judge the ‘Australianness’ or ‘Japaneseness’ of a selection of television advertisements were

administered to 60 Australian and 102 Japanese focus group participants. These questionnaires were primarily introduced to draw participants' attention to the topic of national identity, which was then discussed at greater length. However, the questionnaire responses are analytically useful not only because they provide benchmarks of individual perceptions of national identity, but also because they can be set against my own reading of the mass mediated texts analysed in Chapter Four. Nonetheless, questionnaire responses cannot provide insights into the process of negotiating meaning so central to discourses of national identity.

The final method I employ in my interpretivist-constructionist approach is the in-depth interview. One of the strengths of this method is that it provides a richer understanding than other methods of the way participants' biographies inform their understandings of national identity. Because it is a one-on-one interaction, it also throws into sharp relief the role of the researcher as an active participant in the negotiation of discourses of national identity. Focus groups may provide researchers with a comforting illusion that naturally occurring social phenomena are being observed, and questionnaires may provide quantifiable and seemingly objective measures of participants' attitudes; however in-depth interviews make it (at times uncomfortably) clear that social scientific fieldwork is an embodied process, located within relations of power, and that the products of that fieldwork (field notes, transcripts, and, ultimately, the research report) are themselves negotiated texts or discourses.<sup>20</sup>

### *A comparative approach*

I have already suggested that there is a dearth of empirical research on the links between gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity and globalisation. While an empirical study of such links in one specific national setting would go some way toward addressing this gap in the literature, there are considerable gains to be made in undertaking cross-national comparative research. First, a comparison of Japan and Australia, two nations with quite different cultural and historical trajectories, better

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<sup>20</sup> This is not to deny, however, that researchers have the final say on what is included in their research reports.

allows me to examine certain universalising claims of globalisation theory. Secondly, a cross-national comparison such as the one I have undertaken, with carefully matched population samples, reveals the ways national cultural specificities shape discourses of national identity and responses to globalising social changes.

I agree with Hofstede (1998), however, that because national populations are so complex and diverse, population samples in cross-national studies can never be considered 'representative.' My sampling logic, in any case, is not premised on statistical representativeness (of either participants or the mass mediated texts I analyse). Instead, I employ a theoretical sampling strategy that was designed to put me in contact with a reasonable cross-section of the Australian and Japanese municipalities I studied (in other words, to allow me to speak with men and women, young and old, of diverse occupational and educational backgrounds), and to gather a reasonable sample of the many thousands of television advertisements which air in Australia and Japan each year. The precise dimensions of these samples are detailed below and in Chapter Four.

### The Research Process

Finally, an explication of my research methods and methodology would be incomplete without an examination of the recursivity of the research process, the on-going cyclical movement between data, analysis and theory. I did not begin the research process with a testable hypothesis, but rather with a list of questions aimed at guiding my inquiry toward points of possible relevance. Through a recursive process of engaging with the relevant social scientific literatures, and collecting and analysing empirical data, I gradually refined research concepts and categories; identified specific expectations about the links between gender, ethnicity, national identity and globalisation in Australia and Japan; and developed flexible sampling, data collection and coding strategies which

were constantly reviewed and revised to accommodate new information and observations.<sup>21</sup>

After my initial reading of the relevant literatures, I undertook a content analysis of approximately one thousand Australian and Japanese television advertisements, a process designed to sensitise me to the range of mass mediated discourses of national identity in these two national settings. My final coding categories and their dimensions emerged out of two exercises in extensive preliminary coding and analysis of general patterns of representation. These coding categories, in turn, shaped my choice of the questions and topics I covered in subsequent focus groups and in-depth interviews with Australian and Japanese participants. I then revised and expanded the coding categories again, as new concepts emerged from the collection/analysis of the interview data.<sup>22</sup> It is worth noting that throughout this process, my continued engagement with relevant state and academic discourses was shaped by my emergent understandings of the television and interview data, even as my approach to these data was shaped by my knowledge of, and commitment to some of, those authorised discourses.

As I began to amass a rich collection of data, I undertook a thematic analysis of interview and focus group data in order to identify the key dimensions of participants' discourses of national identity in Japan and Australia. The process of analysis began with transcribing interview and focus group tapes, and then re-reading these transcripts from beginning to end. Listening to the original tapes while reading the transcripts allowed me to check the accuracy of transcriptions (and translations, in the case of the Japanese data); and it allowed me to become deeply familiar with the data, and thus to discern certain patterns emerging from the data. The next step in my analytical process was to read

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<sup>21</sup> My methodology has some similarities with grounded theory, as set out by Corbin and Strauss (1990) and Glaser and Strauss (1967). However, while I find their emphasis on recursivity useful, I have not structured my research according to the quite specific criteria of grounded theory.

<sup>22</sup> Specific coding categories will be described in detail in Chapters Three through Seven.

through all of the transcripts, identifying recurrent themes and phrases. Once I identified these general themes, I examined their nuances by systematically coding the transcripts.<sup>23</sup>

One of the difficulties of undertaking such qualitative and inductive research, characterised by a constant cycling through data collection, data analysis and theory generation, is knowing when one has collected ‘enough’ data and done ‘enough’ analysis. While the engaged researcher could continue amassing pertinent data and refining analytical schemes in perpetuity, I argue that one eventually reaches ‘theoretical saturation’ (Glaser and Strauss 1967: 61-62), the point at which the data stop saying anything new. In terms of my research, I approached theoretical saturation when repeated coding and analysis of transcript data and mass mediated texts yielded recurring themes, rather than new dimensions or understandings of national identity. This said, however, I am attuned to the possibility that I failed to find ‘anything new’ in the data either due to my own theoretical preconceptions or due to my choice of participants and the ways I have asked them about national identity. While my sense is that I have collected and analysed sufficient data to provide a rich understanding of discourses of gendered and ethnicised national identity in the Australian and Japanese municipalities I studied, all research accounts are necessarily partial, in both senses of that word: fragmentary and incomplete; and shaped by personal experiences and expectations.

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<sup>23</sup> It is important to stress that I did not begin with a set of coding categories and then simply identify those passages which ‘fit’ the codes; rather I started out with one simple question, ‘Have I heard this before?’ If I had seen a theme or phrase in a previous transcript, I lifted it out of the transcript and put it aside for later sorting. Finally I sorted these phrases and themes into any number of possible combinations, to explore the complex links between them without the constraint of predetermined categories.

Although I used the computer software packages NUDIST and ATLAS.ti early in my analysis, I decided that the organisational structures of these packages constrained rather than facilitated my analysis. I therefore abandoned my computer screen for poster boards, strips of paper and coloured pencils, which allowed me greater flexibility and more physical space on which to map possible conceptual relationships.



### Research Contexts

Because I aim to examine both the construction of gendered and ethnicised national identities in Australia and Japan and the ways such constructions are shaped by experiences of globalisation, I have encountered somewhat of a methodological double bind. Only large-scale, longitudinal research conducted in a variety of locations across Australia and Japan would allow me to draw more generalisable conclusions about the contours and possible transformations of national identity in those two settings.

However, as I have argued above, only qualitative research with an emphasis on participants' negotiated and context-specific constructions and interpretations of national identity can provide a rich understanding of national identity. In the interest of constructing a more detailed account of gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity in these two settings, I have chosen to centre my research on two municipalities, one Australian and one Japanese. This approach yields a 'snapshot' view of national identity among specific participants in specific places at one moment in time, and allows for a deeper understanding of the social phenomena under consideration. The richness of this data more than compensates for any limitations on the generalisability of the analysis. Moreover, large-scale, statistically 'representative' survey research could not be considered more generalisable to the national population as a whole if it failed to capture in subtle detail the way participants negotiate meaning.

The two municipalities chosen for this study are 'Plainsview' on the Australian island-state of Tasmania, and 'Hirogawa' on the Japanese island-prefecture of Hokkaido. The islands of Tasmania and Hokkaido were chosen for two principal reasons. First, having lived a number of years in both locations, I had social contacts already in place that helped facilitate my entry into the municipalities there. Secondly, Tasmania and Hokkaido have similar geographic, demographic and economic profiles, both being largely agricultural, fishery, forestry and tourism regions, both experiencing rural depopulation and lower levels of economic growth than their respective mainlands, and

both being on the margins of their nations both geographically and socially (see Figures 2.1 and 2.2).

**Figure 2.1 Tasmania and Hokkaido: Geography and Population<sup>24</sup>**

Characteristics		Tasmania		Hokkaido	
Geography	Land area	68, 400 km <sup>2</sup>		83, 452 km <sup>2</sup>	
	Location	The southernmost state in Australia, Tasmania is located approximately 220 kilometres south of the mainland.		The northernmost prefecture in Japan, Hokkaido is located approximately 30 kilometres north of Honshu.	
Population	Population	474,000 people		5,699,000 people	
	Population as percentage of total national population	3%		5%	
	Population by age	0-14 years	23%	0-14 years	15%
		15-64 years	65%	15-64 years	69%
		65+ years	12%	65+ years	16%
	Annual population growth	<b>Tasmania</b> -0.1% (1999-2000)	<b>All-Australia</b> +1.2% (1999-2000)	<b>Hokkaido</b> -0.4% (1995-2000)	<b>All-Japan</b> +1.1% (1995-2000)

<sup>24</sup> Sources: *Asahi Shimbun* (1996); Australian Bureau of Statistics, hereafter abbreviated ABS (2000a, 2000b, 1999a); and Japanese Statistics Bureau (1998, 2001).

**Figure 2.2 Tasmania and Hokkaido: Labour, Economics and Social Services<sup>25</sup>**

<b>Characteristics</b>		<b>Tasmania</b>		<b>Hokkaido</b>	
<b>Labour and Economy</b>	State/prefectural average per capita income as percentage of national average per capita income	88%		91%	
	Leading employment sectors in rank order <sup>26</sup>	(1) Retail trade (2) Manufacturing (3) Property/business services (4) Health/community services (5) Education		(1) Trade/service (2) Construction (3) Manufacturing (4) Transport/communication (5) Agriculture/mining	
<b>Social Services</b>	Hospitals <sup>27</sup>	<b>Tasmania</b>	<b>All-Australia</b>	<b>Hokkaido</b>	<b>All-Japan</b>
		2370 people per hospital	1257 people per hospital	9708 people per hospital	12857 people per hospital
<b>Social Services</b>	General practitioners	<b>Tasmania</b>	<b>All-Australia</b>	<b>Hokkaido</b>	<b>All-Japan</b>
		1000 people per doctor	438 people per doctor	518 people per doctor	508 people per doctor

<sup>25</sup> Sources: *Asahi Shimbun* (1996); ABS (2000a, 2000b, 1999a); and Japanese Statistics Bureau (1998, 2001).

<sup>26</sup> The Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Japanese Statistics Bureau categorise employment sectors differently. I have retained the original categories here.

<sup>27</sup> 'Hospital' is not defined in the publications from which these statistics are drawn. Differing definitions of the term may account for the relatively large apparent difference between Hokkaido and Tasmania.

Plainsview and Hirogawa are also similar in their population size relative to their respective state/prefectural populations, their proximity to the state/prefectural capital, and their concentration on agriculture, forestry, and light/cottage industries: jam factories, fish processing and timber processing in Plainsview; noodle factories, *sake* factories and timber processing in Hirogawa (see Figures 2.3 and 2.4).

Just as I attempted to choose municipalities with similar social profiles, I attempted to get ‘matched’ samples of participants from Plainsview and Hirogawa. To this end, I employed snowball sampling to contact individuals who met my specifications for gender, occupation and age.<sup>28</sup> This is not a statistically representative sample, but a theoretical sample, premised on an expectation that people in different social locations would have different understandings of national identity and different responses to globalising social changes. In total, I conducted in-depth interviews or focus groups with 79 Australian and 116 Japanese participants, including students, teachers, public servants, business owners, private sector employees, farmers and retirees (see Figure 2.5).

Keeping in mind the possibility that age (in particular wartime experiences) would shape participants’ views of national identity and globalisation, I attempted to interview people born before the end of World War II and people born after World War II in each occupational group. I was able to interview male and female farmers of both generations in Plainsview and Hirogawa, perhaps because the prevalence of family farming in both these areas meant that both the older and younger generation continued to be active in the family business. I was not always able to separate other occupational groups by age, however, particularly in the case of women workers. In both Australia and Japan, before World War II, women had fewer employment, educational and entrepreneurial opportunities than in the post-war period, with the result that older women business owners, public servants and employees are harder to find.

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<sup>28</sup> Because few members of ethnic minorities live in these two areas, my samples do not reflect the national ethnic diversity of Japan and Australia; however, the samples do reflect fairly accurately the ethnic composition of the two communities studied. The Australian sample includes several migrants from the United Kingdom and New Zealand, one migrant from Southern Europe, and several Australian-born descendants of European migrants. All Japanese participants were ethnically Japanese.

Figure 2.3 Plainsview and Hirogawa: Geography, Population and Education<sup>29</sup>

Characteristics		Plainsview		Hirogawa	
Geography	Land area	5,620 km <sup>2</sup> encompassing six semi-independent townships		204 km <sup>2</sup> encompassing 25 semi-independent townships	
	Distance from state/prefectural capital	40 km		40 km	
Population	Population	12,176 people		15,634 people	
	Age of population (%)	0-14 years	26%	0-14 years	13%
		15-64 years	64%	15-64 years	65%
		65+ years	10%	65+ years	22%
Education	Number of schools by type <sup>30</sup>			Kinder-garten	1
		Primary	4	Primary	4
		High school	3	High school	3
		Other	1	Other	2

<sup>29</sup> Sources: ABS (2000b, 1998); and town council publications from the communities studied. In order to protect the anonymity of participants, I do not provide a list of these community documents.

<sup>30</sup> In Plainsview, most students attend a primary school from kindergarten to year six, a high school in years seven to ten, and a college in years 11 and 12. In Hirogawa, most students attend a separate kindergarten, a primary school from years one to six, a junior high school in years seven to nine, and a senior high school in years ten to 12. In this table, Hirogawa’s junior and senior high schools have been combined.

Figure 2.4 Plainsview and Hirogawa: Labour and Social Services<sup>31</sup>

Characteristics		Plainsview	Hirogawa
Labour	Leading employment sectors by percentage of total workforce employed <sup>32</sup>	Trade, service, transport and communications (54%)	Trade, service, transport and communications (50%)
		Mining, construction and manufacturing (23%)	Mining, construction and manufacturing (28%)
		Agriculture, forestry and fishery (23%)	Agriculture, forestry and fishery (22%)
Social Services	Hospital beds	12	331
	Physicians	11	23
	Facilities for the elderly	4 (96 beds)	3 (280 beds)
	Childcare centres	8	3

<sup>31</sup> Sources: ABS (2000b, 1998); and town council publications from the communities studied. In order to protect the anonymity of participants, I do not provide a list of these community documents.

<sup>32</sup> Plainsview figures have been aggregated for comparison with Hirogawa aggregate categories.

**Figure 2.5 Profile of Research Participants in Australia and Japan**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>N (Japan)</b>	<b>N (Australia)</b>	<b>N (TOTAL)</b>
High School Students	17	11	28
Male	11	5	
Female	6	6	
Teachers	17	4	21
Male	7	2	
Female	10	2	
Public Servants	23	12	35
Males born before 1945	6	0	
Males born after 1945	9	4	
Females born before 1945	0	0	
Females born after 1945	8	8	
Business Owners	12	11	23
Male	7	5	
Female	5	6	
Employees (Private Sector)	12	8	20
Male	7	5	
Female	5	3	
Farmers	21	21	42
Males born before 1945	5	5	
Males born after 1945	5	7	
Females born before 1945	5	4	
Females born after 1945	6	5	
Retired People	14	12	26
Male	8	6	
Female	6	6	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>195</b>

While, on the whole, the number of Japanese and Australian participants in each category is fairly well balanced, there are two obvious disparities. First, although I spent only three months conducting interviews in Hirogawa compared to seven months in

Plainsview, I was able to interview more and a wider variety of people in Hirogawa than in Plainsview. Secondly, in one occupational category, teachers, I was able to recruit very few Plainsview participants, despite contacting every primary and secondary government school in the municipality. Admittedly, I had a more established network of contacts in the Hirogawa than in Plainsview; but this is only a partial explanation of my greater difficulties recruiting participants in Tasmania. More interestingly, such difficulties highlight the extent to which field research is an embodied process, as argued above, a set of negotiated encounters located within relations of power.

As a 'white' American-born researcher in Australia and Japan, I was always an outsider, which in most instances worked to my advantage, as I could play the 'socially acceptable incompetent' (Lofland and Lofland 1995: 56-57), allowing me to ask people to explain what would be common sense to a cultural insider. However, in Japan my ethnicity and nationality seemed to work to my advantage, while in Australia I was greeted with scepticism. These very different outcomes are likely the result of the very different historical and contemporary encounters between Japan and the United States, and Australia and the United States. This is more than simply an interesting footnote. For these relationships shaped the research process, undoubtedly contributing to people's decisions whether or not to participate, and even colouring many of the comments they made in interviews.

It was not unusual, for instance, for Australian participants to begin criticising America and Americans, and then suddenly stop and ask, 'You're not American, are you?' [Phillip, a teacher]. Likewise, the following comments made by Trudy, a public servant, reveal that participants may temper their statements to suit the perceived background of the researcher: 'I hate American-ness! . . . [But] I have nothing against you. I met you, met you as a person. . . . [and] I'm not really that nationalistic.'



### Summary

In this chapter, I have outlined the key concepts and research methods I employ in my examination of national identities in Australia and Japan. To recapitulate, I argue that the social world is collectively constructed by individuals as they create and use systems of meaning. I argue that nations are not merely geo-political entities, but are symbolic constructs, and that national identities, likewise, are constituted by overlapping authorised, mass mediated and folk discourses of national belonging.

In my conceptualisation of discourse, both the products and process of discourse are given equal weight. Therefore, in my research methodology, I combine the analysis of the content of discourses of national identity with an examination of the negotiation of such discourses by research participants in Australia and Japan. Furthermore, because I argue that discourses of national identity reflect, reinforce and challenge power relations in these two settings, I examine not only the discourses themselves but how they are employed in ways which legitimate or contest the dominance of some social groups and the marginalisation of others.

Finally, I make no claims for the statistical representativeness of my research samples. However, the municipalities studied were chosen for their demographic, economic and geographical similarities, and participants were selected on the basis of age, sex and occupational characteristics, to create carefully 'matched' samples of Australian and Japanese participants. These strategies allow for the examination of both local specificities and more general trends in the ways national identities are constituted under conditions of globalisation.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### ACADEMIC AND STATE DISCOURSES OF NATIONAL IDENTITY AND GLOBALISATION: AN ENGAGED LITERATURE REVIEW

My engagement with authorised discourses of national identity and globalisation has shaped the design of my empirical investigations, the analysis of the television and interview data I gathered, and the conclusions I have drawn from the research process. In this chapter, I outline the key theoretical premises of this thesis. These are premises in the sense that they serve as the starting point for my analysis of mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity in subsequent chapters; however, in a broader sense, these are guiding principles derived from my reading of authorised discourses of national identity and globalisation.

It should be stressed that the authorised discourses to which I refer in this chapter are by no means static. They are as much the product/process of negotiation as are the mass mediated and folk discourses I analyse. However, my purpose in this chapter is not to provide a systematic analysis of the conditions of the production of these authorised discourses. Rather this chapter examines the ways this thesis incorporates, challenges, and ultimately contributes to authorised discourses of national identity.

#### Key Premises

*Nations are discursively gendered.*

A central premise of this thesis is that nations are gendered through authorised, mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity. I have developed much of my understanding of these gendered discourses of national identity from feminist literatures.

One strand of feminist literature suggests that while men have come to rule contemporary nations, women have come to symbolise them.<sup>33</sup> As McClintock argues, 'Women are typically construed as the symbolic bearers of the nation, but are denied any

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<sup>33</sup> See, for instance, De Groot (1993), Dixson (1976), Kapferer (1996), Lake (1986), Magarey et al. (1993), McClintock (1993), Radcliffe (1999), Radhakrishnan (1992), Sawyer (1996), Summers (1975), and Willis (1993).

direct relation to national agency' (McClintock 1993: 62). Following Boehmer (1991), she suggests that men are metonymic with the nation, while women serve as metaphors of the nation. In other words, men *are* the nation, while women simply *stand for* the nation.

At first glance, this argument seems intuitively correct. In the popular imagination, women are strongly linked to nature and to the home, two powerful symbols of nation. Moreover, because women bear the new members of the nation, women's bodies serve as markers of national boundaries, through limits on marriage and sexual relations with certain 'outsiders' (Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989). As Peterson (1996: 7) argues:

From the familiar personification of nature-as-female it is an easy slide to reading the nation-as-woman. This depicts the Motherland as spatial, embodied femaleness: The land's fecundity, upon which the people depend, must be protected by defending the body/nation's boundaries against invasion and violation by foreign males. . . . The rape of the body/nation not only violates frontiers but disrupts—by planting alien seed or destroying reproductive viability—the maintenance of the community through time.

However, it would be overly simplistic to suggest that nations are always discursively gendered in the feminine. Figures such as Uncle Sam in the United States or John Bull in the United Kingdom sit alongside Lady Liberty and Britannia as powerful symbols of those nations.

It is clear, however, that in many contemporary nations, women are discursively constructed as guardians of the hearth and conservators of 'tradition.'<sup>34</sup> Women are represented as 'the atavistic and authentic "body" of the national tradition (inert, backward-looking and natural)' while men are portrayed as 'the progressive agent[s] of national modernity (forward-thrusting, potent and historic)' (McClintock 1993: 66). Such gendered discourses reproduce long-standing gender stereotypes, and in so doing, naturalise gender inequality.

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<sup>34</sup> I agree with Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) that many so-called 'traditions' are not enduring practices from time immemorial, but are practices which are constructed as symbolically salient in a society. Therefore, throughout this thesis, I use the term 'tradition' carefully, usually placing it in inverted commas to highlight that it is a social construct, what people *perceive* to be tradition.

State institutions are at least complicit and often actively engaged in the production of such gendered discourses of nation. Pateman (1988) argues, in fact, that the liberal democratic nation-state itself is based on an inherently male social contract, one which precludes women from full participation in patriarchal civil society.<sup>35</sup> Empirical evidence presented in this thesis lends support to Pateman's argument that the rhetoric and practices of contemporary liberal democratic states contribute to the symbolic and material marginalisation of women.

However, while such state discursive practices help maintain gender inequality, it is crucial to recognise that other authorised discourses (particularly academic discourses), as well as mass mediated and folk discourses, challenge this patriarchal state authority. A study such as this one, which explicates gendered narratives of nation in Australia and Japan, constitutes one such challenge to these gendered discourses and practices.

*Nations are discursively ethnicised.*

A second premise of this thesis is that nations are ethnicised through authorised, mass mediated and folk discourses. In Australia and Japan, as in many other national settings, the concepts of ethnicity and 'race' are inextricably bound up with notions of nation.<sup>36</sup> At the outset, the overlapping concepts of ethnicity and 'race' require careful definition.<sup>37</sup> In this thesis 'ethnicity' refers to the cultural characteristics, such as language, religion or custom, shared by a group of people and used by that group, and/or by others, to define

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<sup>35</sup> I would argue that states are those institutions which control the means of legitimate violence (the military and police), and that suffrage and citizenship can be understood as compensation for potentially sacrificing one's life in the service of institutions of state violence. Since women have been largely excluded from these institutions, it is clear that citizenship, the very foundation of the democratic nation-state, is a contract largely *between* and *for* men.

<sup>36</sup> See for instance, Dikotter's (1996) discussion of China; Goh (1999) and Waters (1997) on the United Kingdom; Rahier's (1998) analysis of Ecuador; and Yoshino's (1997) discussion of Japan and his (1999) volume on ethnicity and nationalism in Asia.

<sup>37</sup> Following recent scholarship, I place the term 'race' in inverted commas to reflect my position that it is not a biologically valid category. However, I do not customarily use inverted commas for terms such as 'racialise' and 'racial,' because these refer, in most cases, to *ways of using* the concept of 'race.' For a discussion of the social construction of 'race,' see Gould (1984), Miles (1982), Stanton (1966) and Stocking (1982).

them *as* a group. ‘Race,’ on the other hand, refers to *supposedly* genetically inherited biological and behavioural traits thought to be characteristic of a particular group of people. Although there is a high degree of conceptual slippage between ‘race’ and ‘ethnicity,’ I primarily focus on ethnicised discourses of nation, because few current discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan *overtly* centre on supposed biological characteristics of the national populace.<sup>38</sup> However, as evidence in subsequent chapters will show, while ethnicity figures more prominently in current discourses of Australian and Japanese national identity, ‘race’ is often implicit in such discourses.<sup>39</sup>

In my conceptualisation of ethnicised national identities, I draw primarily on Said’s (1978) explication of ‘Orientalism’ and Hage’s (1998) discussion of the ‘white nation fantasy.’ Said argues that Western European, and to some extent North American, nations have formulated their national identities through the definition and domination of the ‘Oriental’ Other.<sup>40</sup> Said defines Orientalism as, ‘the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient--dealing with it by making statements about it, authorising views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it: in short, Orientalism is a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient’ (1978: 2-3).

Through texts and processes as diverse as unequal trade and foreign relations treaties, colonial government administration, anthropological treatises and artistic works, the West has constructed itself as active, forward-looking and masculine, while constructing the East as passive, receptive and feminine. Such discourses have served a

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<sup>38</sup> Such biologised explanations of national uniqueness are more common in Japan than in Australia.

<sup>39</sup> Where the distinction between ethnicised and racialised discourses is unclear, I use combined terms such as ‘ethnic/racial.’

<sup>40</sup> Throughout the thesis, I use the term ‘Other’ to designate groups who are considered distinct from a dominant group in some way. As a consequence ‘Other’ is an inherently shifting and contested category. For instance, evidence presented in this thesis suggests that in Australia, ‘non-white’ migrants and their descendants are generally constructed by ‘white’ Australians as ethnic Others; however, even light-skinned European migrants from non-English-speaking countries are sometimes constructed as Others. Likewise, in Japan, ‘whites,’ ‘blacks’ and non-Japanese Asians are generally constructed as ethnic Others; however sometimes even Japan’s indigenous *Ainu* and *Ryukyuu* peoples are constructed as Others.

dual purpose: they have allowed Westerners to imagine themselves as rational, mature and forthright; and, therefore, these discourses have provided Westerners with the justification for material practices of exploitation. Thus, in Said's discussion of Orientalism, symbolic and material practices of domination are inseparable.

While Said discusses the framing of national identity in relation to foreign Others, Hage (1998) suggests that categories of ethnic difference *within* a nation can be defined and maintained to shore up the privileged position of the dominant group(s). Hage discusses what he terms the Australian 'white nation fantasy,' the taken-for-granted notion that 'whites' are the legitimate owners and rulers of the Australian nation.<sup>41</sup> This assumed proprietorship surfaces in sites as diverse as graffiti, political speeches and such commonplace expressions as '*our* coloured people' and '*our* aborigines,' which position 'white' Australians as governors of the national space, with both the right and the responsibility to rule the Others within.

Hage suggests that in Australia ethnic Others are identified and then excluded from national belonging not only by so-called 'racism' (overt racial discrimination) but also by 'anti-racism' (the denunciation of racism and the celebration of multiculturalism). He argues that the rhetoric of multicultural tolerance serves to reinforce 'white' privilege in Australia; it is, 'a strategy aimed at reproducing and disguising relationships of power in society, or being reproduced through that disguise. It is a form of symbolic violence in which a mode of domination is presented as a form of egalitarianism. . . . [It is] the power to position the other as an object within a space that one considers one's own, within limits one feels legitimately capable of setting' (1998: 87, 90). He argues that multiculturalism allows 'white' Australians to construct themselves as beneficent and tolerant toward Others, which further reinforces their implicit right of governance.

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<sup>41</sup> Following Hage (1998), I use the term 'white Australian' rather than other common expressions such as 'Anglo-,' 'Anglo-Saxon,' or 'Anglo-Celtic' Australian, which exclude the many Australians of non-British background who are still considered 'white.' Where 'Anglo-' is used, it refers specifically to those from the United Kingdom, or to the English language. I also agree with Hage (1998: 57-62) that whiteness is not an either/or category. One can be perceived as more 'white' or less 'white' depending on such factors as one's religion, the language one speaks, or the degree to which one adopts 'white' ways of life.

Hage argues that what are often called ‘racist’ discourses and practices in Australia, are not solely about ‘race,’ but are about imagined control over the national space. ‘Race’ often only becomes problematic, he argues, when the proliferation or concentration of ‘racial’ Others renders them difficult for the dominant group to manage. Consequently, he argues that what are frequently categorised as ‘racist’ practices can be understood as strategies of ‘spatial management’ (1998: 37-38).<sup>42</sup> He notes, moreover, that those who commit ‘racist’ acts and engage in ‘racist’ discourses in one sense act from a position of power, in that they believe they are asserting their presumed right to say who does and does not belong in *their* nation. In another sense, however, they act from a position of disempowerment, for socially powerful individuals who feel secure in their right to rule,

... don’t need to deploy personal violence for national purposes. They are secure in the knowledge that the state is acting out their violence for them. In this sense, those who engage in such personal violent acts feel that they have lost this special relation to state power. They feel that the state is no longer doing their violence for them. . . . Nevertheless, they think they have a legitimate claim to represent the national will embodied in the state (Hage 1998: 69).

In sum, economic and political conditions profoundly shape the way ethnicity is employed as a category of difference in discourses of national identity. As discourses of ‘us’ and ‘them,’ national identities are formulated with reference to imagined Others, either foreign or internal. In terms of this thesis, while I do not use the term ‘Orientalise,’ I will argue that foreign Others are essentialised in Australian and Japanese discourses in ways which more sharply define national identity. Furthermore, I will suggest that in both Australia and Japan, discourses of national identity reveal the assumed right and responsibility of the dominant ethnic group to rule the nation. Since Hage’s term ‘white nation fantasy’ cannot be applied to Japan where ‘whites’ are not the dominant group, I discuss the ideologies of *white proprietorship* in Australia and *ethnic Japanese proprietorship* in Japan. More generally, I use the term *ethnic proprietorship* to refer to

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<sup>42</sup> Of course, such practices and discourses are not necessarily politically innocent, for they may still be used to disempower and disadvantage Others.

the taken-for-granted notion that members of the dominant ethnic group are the legitimate owners and governors of the nation.

*Discourses of nation reflect, reinforce and challenge social inequalities.*

A key principle informing this work is that *discourse matters*. It matters because it shapes social worlds and social interactions. As Yeatman (1990: 155), drawing on Foucault, puts it, 'Discourse is the power to create reality by naming it and giving it meaning.' Discourses of national identity do not merely reflect national social order; they are constitutive of that order. When widely circulating narratives of nation in Australia and Japan discursively marginalise women and ethnic minorities, they both mirror and help sustain the inequalities faced by these groups. When counter-narratives of nation challenge the symbolic marginalisation of women and ethnic minorities, they both reflect and contribute to the increasing status of these groups.

In recent decades, scholars have documented the material disadvantages faced by women and ethnic minorities in Australia and Japan. That this research exists at all is a testament to ever-shifting negotiations of the rights and roles of these groups within their national communities. Such scholarship is therefore significant as a reflection of the social standing of women and ethnic minorities in these two settings; however, it is also significant in that such discourses have the potential to contribute to social change. Research into the experiences of subordinated groups has translated into changes in institutional policies and in public perceptions, as detailed below. It has also fuelled further research into the complex origins and consequences of such inequality. My own research represents one such attempt to more fully understand the relationships between the symbolic and material marginalisation of women and ethnic minorities in Australia and Japan. I stress, however, that the literature on the disadvantage of women and ethnic minorities in Australia and Japan is by no means homogeneous or static. Research questions and conclusions are constantly being reshaped by diverse social conditions. Furthermore, the empirical evidence presented below should itself be considered a discursive construct, shaped by complex political, economic and social factors.



### Women as a subordinated social group in Australia and Japan

Scholars have suggested that in terms of several key indicators, women in Australia and Japan face disadvantage relative to men, at home, at school and at work. They argue that in Australian and Japanese homes, it is women who shoulder the majority of unpaid domestic labour, including child care and elder care.<sup>43</sup> Feminist theorists argue that such unequal division of domestic labour contributes to the oppression of women in three key ways. First, employers appropriate, and profit from, the domestic labour of women by not paying them for reproducing and maintaining the workforce. Secondly, because women are not paid for their domestic labour, all women's labour comes to be devalued, so that even women in the paid workforce are paid, on average, less than men. Thirdly, the extra time women, compared to men, spend on domestic labour reduces the amount of time they are able to commit to pursuits such as political action or union membership which might lead to a more equitable representation of women's interests and concerns.<sup>44</sup>

However, scholars suggest that not only is the home a site of substantial amounts of unpaid female labour, it is also a site of violence against women. A 1996 survey of Australian women by the Commonwealth Office of the Status of Women<sup>45</sup> found that 23 percent of respondents who had been married or in a de facto relationship had experienced violence by a partner at some time during that relationship (OSW 1999). Likewise, at least some Japanese scholars suggest that domestic violence is widespread and under-reported in Japan (Hada 1995). According to a survey conducted by the Prime Minister's Office in 1998, one in three women reported some form of physical abuse in the home (Japanese Cabinet Office 2001). The collection of such data by Australian and Japanese state agencies reflects an increased willingness to view domestic violence not as a 'private' matter but as a criminal matter requiring state scrutiny and intervention.

Turning to education, it appears at first glance that women and girls in Australian and Japanese educational institutions have the same opportunities as their male counterparts. Enrolment and graduation figures suggest that similar proportions of young

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<sup>43</sup> See, for instance, Bittman and Lovejoy (1993), Iwao (1993) and Sodei (1995).

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, Hochschild and Machung (1989) and Oakley (1974).

<sup>45</sup> Hereafter abbreviated OSW.

women and young men complete high school and attend post-secondary educational institutions. However, feminist scholars have argued that such overall trends belie substantial differences in educational outcomes for women and men. In both nations, men currently outnumber women in high-status, competitive degree programs such as law, engineering and medicine, while women are concentrated in lower-status fields such as education, nursing, the humanities and the arts. Furthermore, men outnumber women both in post-graduate studies, and among senior academic and administrative staff in the educational institutions of both countries.<sup>46</sup>

It is in scholarship on the workplace that women's disadvantage comes into sharpest focus, however. In a 1998 Australian labour survey, women constituted only 27 percent of managers, eight percent of board members, and just over one percent of executive directors in private sector companies of 100 or more employees (OSW 1999). Women in public sector jobs fared little better, making up only 24 percent of permanent employees at the Senior Executive level and 29 percent of board members, and constituting just 24 percent of commonwealth parliamentarians (OSW 1999). In Japan, one Labour Ministry poll reported that women occupied only 4.1 percent of managerial positions across the nation, and 1.7 percent of directorships (*The Japan Times*, 11 May, 1994), and constitute only 5.9 percent of members of parliament (Iwao 1993: 218). Tellingly, female employees in Japan are often called 'office flowers' (*shokuba no hana*) or 'tea fetchers' (*ochakumi*), and a woman's paid work is often called her 'temporary seat' (*koshikake*), revealing a view of female employees as decorative, low-skill, temporary workers (Iwao 1993: 156). Australian and Japanese women's under-representation in high-level jobs accounts, in part, for their lower average earnings than their male colleagues. In Australia, women earn, on average, 20 percent less than men; and in Japan, women earn an average of almost 40 percent less than men (ABS 2000a; Iwao 1993: 190).

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<sup>46</sup> ABS (2000c), Brinton (1993: 201-203), Japanese Ministry of Education (1990), and OSW (1999).

Again, the existence of state-funded research on the employment status of women in Australia and Japan, and the coverage such research receives in the mass media, signals increasing recognition by the state and society more generally of the importance of gender inequality. Such authorised accounts of women's disadvantage in Australia and Japan contribute to counter-narratives of nation which contest more widely circulating discourses which marginalise and inferiorise women in their respective national imagined communities.

### Ethnic minorities as subordinated Others in Australia and Japan

Although discourses of national identity in Australia and particularly in Japan frequently obscure the presence of ethnic minorities, a number of ethnic groups coexist in the two nations. In Australia, of the nation's 18.6 million people, 3.9 million were born overseas (six percent in the United Kingdom and Ireland, almost seven percent in Europe, five percent in Asia, two percent in Oceania, one percent in the Middle East and North Africa, and another two percent elsewhere); almost 340,000 people self-identify as indigenous Australians; and more than 2.6 million speak a language other than English in the home (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 1998; ABS 2000c). In Japan, of the nation's 122 million people, the largest ethnic minority groups include roughly 1.6 million ethnic Okinawans (the *Ryukyuu*), more than one million ethnic Koreans, over 200,000 ethnic Chinese, more than 24,000 *Ainu* and an estimated three million *Burakumin* (*Asahi Shimbun* 1996; Murphy-Shigematsu 1993; Taira 1997: 142-43).<sup>47</sup> In addition, labour shortages in the 1980s brought an influx of migrant workers to Japan, mostly from East and Southeast Asia, the Middle East and South America, approximately 700,000 of whom continue to work in Japan (*Asahi Shimbun* 1996). Scholars have

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<sup>47</sup> While the *Burakumin* are marginalised more on the basis of caste-like characteristics (whether they and/or their ancestors engage/d in 'unclean' work) than ethnic characteristics, for analytical purposes I group them with Japan's ethnic minority groups. The exact size of Japan's *Buraku* and *Ainu* populations is difficult to determine because many in these marginalised groups choose to change their family names and 'pass' as majority Japanese.

suggested that ethnic minorities in both Australia and Japan face disadvantages in education, employment, criminal justice and health relative to dominant ethnic groups.

Focusing on educational outcomes, some researchers note, for instance, that currently 11 percent of indigenous Australians hold post-secondary educational qualifications, compared with 31 percent of non-indigenous Australians (ABS 1999b); and that non-English-speaking background (NESB) migrants are less likely to receive employment-related training than their English-speaking background coworkers (VandenHeuvel and Wooden 1997). Other researchers point out, however, that migrants outperform native-borns in certain educational measures (Lamb, et al. 2000). In Japan, statistics on the educational outcomes of minority ethnic groups are not routinely collected, indicating the lack of official recognition of these groups. However, anecdotal evidence reported in the mass media suggests that ethnic Korean and ethnic Chinese children routinely face ostracism in Japanese public schools which negatively affects their educational outcomes (*The Japan Times*, 16 February, 1994).

Scholars have also argued that ethnic minorities in Australia and Japan are disadvantaged in terms of employment. Maani (1994) has found that in Australia, young (16-25 year old) NESB migrants and children of NESB migrants experience more frequent and longer periods of unemployment relative to Australian-born youth of non-migrant parents; and the ABS (1999b) has reported that the unemployment rate amongst indigenous Australians is 23 percent, considerably higher than the rate for non-indigenous Australians, at nine percent. ABS figures also indicate that indigenous Australians and NESB migrants are over-represented in low-status, low-pay jobs, which accounts, in part, for their lower median weekly incomes relative to majority Australians (ABS 1999b). However, state collection of employment statistics by ethnicity suggests official recognition of the importance of non-discriminatory employment practices, or at least the *appearance* of equity in employment for Australians of all ethnic backgrounds.

By contrast, in Japan, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare does not routinely calculate unemployment and income statistics for specific ethnic groups, once again rendering invisible the potential disadvantages of ethnic minority groups. However,

examination of Ministry of Home Affairs guidelines (revised in 1996) reveals that non-citizens are restricted from holding, or even applying for, a wide range of jobs in the civil service (U.S. Department of State 2000). This restricts employment opportunities for ethnic Koreans and ethnic Chinese who are unlikely to hold Japanese citizenship even if their families have lived in Japan for several generations. While these groups are legally entitled to apply for naturalisation, the complicated and costly bureaucratic process, the inability to maintain dual nationality, and memories of Japan's military domination of Asia serve as barriers to the naturalisation of Korean and Chinese permanent residents of Japan. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that employment discrimination against *Burakumin* is widespread (*Buraku Liberation and Human Rights Research Institute* 2001). The lack of widely-accessible state-sponsored research on such issues suggests that ethnic relations are currently less dynamic in Japan than in Australia.

Scholars and state agencies have also found that ethnic minorities in Australia and Japan face further disadvantages in their encounters with criminal justice agencies. For instance, the ABS reports that in Australia although indigenous people constitute just over two percent of the nation's population, they constitute 19 percent of the adult prison population and 40 percent of children in juvenile justice facilities (ABS 1999b). Likewise, there is growing evidence that in Japan non-Japanese face disadvantage, harassment and even physical abuse in their encounters with criminal justice and immigration authorities, and that they are frequently denied adequate legal representation and language translation services in criminal proceedings.<sup>48</sup>

Finally, some researchers argue that disadvantages Australian ethnic minorities face in education, employment and the criminal justice system translate into inequalities in health. The ABS has reported that those who speak languages other than English in the home are less likely than those speaking English to report being in good or excellent health (ABS 2000c); and Alcorso (1989) suggests that NESB migrants are more likely to suffer compensable work-related injuries than their Australian-born colleagues.

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<sup>48</sup> See *The Japan Times*, 28 October, 1994; 25 December, 1994; 30 December, 1994; 31 January, 1995; and U.S. Department of State 2000.

According to ABS statistics, Australia's indigenous population also experiences higher rates of smoking, alcoholism, obesity, over-crowding and violence than the non-indigenous population, and is less likely to have adequate access to health care services. These factors go some way toward explaining the dramatically lower life expectancy of indigenous Australians: 56.9 years for indigenous males compared to 75.2 years for Australian males on the whole; and 61.7 years for indigenous females compared to 81.1 years for Australian females on the whole (ABS 1999b). It is important to reiterate, however, that the existence of state-sponsored research into such issues in Australia signals official recognition of their importance.

By contrast, statistics on the health of ethnic minorities in Japan are not readily available. Health statistics published by the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare are not broken down by ethnic group, demonstrating a lack of state recognition of ethnic differences within the nation. However, research bodies outside of Japan suggest that recent changes to the national health coverage scheme are certain to adversely affect already disadvantaged minorities in Japan (Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada 1999). These foreign scholars note that in 1998, the Japanese state shifted more of the financial burden for medical treatment to patients themselves, doubling the average out-of-pocket expenses for outpatient services. It is argued that such cost increases will disproportionately disadvantage social groups who are already economically marginalised in Japanese society.

In sum, scholarship in Australia and Japan has documented the material disadvantage faced by women and ethnic minorities in these two nations. Such scholarship contributes to counter-narratives of nation which challenge more widely circulating discourses of national identity. I wish to argue that just as discourses of national identity which marginalise women and ethnic minorities reflect and reinforce the subordination of these groups, so counter-narratives of nation mirror and contribute to an increased and ever-increasing recognition of the roles of women and ethnic minorities in their national communities.

*Historically, Australian national identity has been constructed as masculine and 'white.'*

Starting in the 1970s, with a growing recognition of ethnic diversity and women's rights in Australia, a number of scholars began to focus on patriarchal and 'white' national imagery.<sup>49</sup> These scholars suggested that, historically, narratives of Australian national identity have centred primarily on the values of egalitarianism and 'mateship,' on popular pastimes such as sport, gambling and beer-drinking, and on national archetypes such as the ANZAC, the larrikin, the swagman, and the sun-bronzed surf lifesaver.<sup>50</sup> This national imaginary was strongly gendered and ethnicised in ways which privileged male over female and 'white' over 'non-white.' In fact, Summers (1975) argued that Australian national identity historically centred on 'white' masculine principles, pursuits and archetypes to such an extent that 'Australian' essentially meant 'white male Australian.'<sup>51</sup>

While there has been increased recognition in recent decades of the contributions of women and ethnic minorities to the nation (recognition that has, in part, grown out of the above scholarship and out of state discourses of multiculturalism), masculine and 'white' discourses of national identity have been rekindled periodically. In two prominent examples, such gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity became apparent during the build-up to the Australian Bicentenary of 1988, and again in the mid-to late-1990s with the rise of the populist One Nation Party and the national referendum on retaining links with the British monarchy.

Turner (1994) has examined the key events and personalities which served to reinforce gendered and ethnicised discourses of nation in the 1980s. Crucially, he notes that 'white' Australian men defeated the United States in the America's Cup of 1983, and

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<sup>49</sup> See, for example, Bennett et al. (1992), Kapferer (1996), Summers (1975), Turner (1994), White (1981) and Willis (1993).

<sup>50</sup> ANZAC refers to the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps of World War I, but the term is often applied to Australian soldiers of both world wars; the larrikin is an irreverent urban wag; and the swagman, who appears in Australian folklore and songs such as 'Waltzing Matilda,' was an itinerant worker who travelled with nothing but the pack (or 'swag') on his back.

<sup>51</sup> As a telling historical example, at the turn of the twentieth century, the slogan of the popular Australian journal, *The Bulletin*, was 'Australia for the White Man.'

successfully challenged the British crown in the 1985 Maralinga Royal Commission hearings in London.<sup>52</sup> At the same time entrepreneurs such as Alan Bond, Kerry Packer and Rupert Murdoch were proving the grit of 'white' Australian manhood on a global stage, and Paul Hogan was embodying long-standing clichés of 'white' male Australianness as 'Crocodile Dundee.' These events and the 'white' Australian men at their centre, reinforced 'white' masculine discourses of Australianness in the 1980s. Such gendered and ethnicised visions of national identity did not go uncontested, however. Official bicentennial celebrations in 1988 were widely criticised for their 'white' bias and their failure to include non-British migrants and indigenous Australians (Turner 1994; Castles, et al. 1988).

In the mid- to late-1990s, national identity was once again hotly debated in Australia. The mid-1990s saw the rise of controversial parliamentarian Pauline Hanson and her One Nation Party. The party advocated restrictions both on immigration and on social welfare programs for migrant and indigenous Australians, a platform that raised issues of Australian racial and cultural integrity which were widely discussed by politicians, intellectuals, the mass media and the general public. At the same time, the nation was also preparing for the 2000 Sydney Olympics, the centenary of Federation, and a referendum on severing ties with the British monarchy.

As the nation moved toward the referendum, proposed changes to the Australian Constitution, and particularly the proposed addition of a Constitutional Preamble, became the objects of intense media attention. While Prime Minister Howard, with the assistance of poet Les Murray, set about drafting a document which would reflect 'a sense of our history, a sense of who we are, a sense of what we believe in . . . and a sense of what we aspire to achieve' (Howard cited in *The Australian*, 24 March, 1999), politicians, literary figures and even school children were asked to submit their own versions of this historic narrative of nation to local and national newspapers.<sup>53</sup> The draft Preamble was released

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<sup>52</sup> The America's Cup is an international yacht race; and in the Maralinga hearings, Australia challenged the British Crown on contamination of a British nuclear weapons test site named Maralinga in South Australia.

<sup>53</sup> This points to the interconnectedness of authorised and mass mediated discourses of national identity.



in March, 1999. However, two of its key elements attracted intense public scrutiny: references to the indigenous peoples of Australia and to 'mateship'.<sup>54</sup>

While many Australian aboriginal leaders strongly advocated Preamble acknowledgment of aboriginal 'custodianship' of the land, the Prime Minister's reference to the nation's indigenous population instead read, 'Since time immemorial our land has been inhabited by Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, who are honoured for their ancient and continuing cultures.' This draft Preamble reveals the ideology of 'white' proprietorship of the nation. In its reference to '*our* land' and '*their* cultures,' the document constructs 'white' Australians as 'us,' the rightful owners and governors of the nation, and reduces indigenous Australians to 'them,' the 'passive object[s] of government' (cf. Hage 1998: 17).

The draft Preamble sparked debate not only about the place of indigenous peoples in the national imaginary, but about the centrality of 'mateship' in the life of the nation. Responding to the inclusion of the term 'mateship' in the proposed Preamble, women's groups, such as the Australian Women Lawyers Association, protested that the term was 'at the core of women's exclusion from business and public domains,' and a 'symbol of discrimination against women' (Australian Broadcasting Corporation <sup>55</sup> 1999a). Likewise, the Australian Democrats, the party holding the balance of power in the Senate, lobbied for 'mateship' to be dropped from the Preamble on the grounds that it privileged a 'white' masculinist vision of Australian national identity (ABC 1999a; 1999b).<sup>56</sup>

While linguists, historians, feminists and opposition politicians argued that 'mateship' described only the bonds between 'white' males, particularly wartime and sporting bonds (ABC 1999a; 1999c; 1999d; 1999e), the Prime Minister defended the term

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<sup>54</sup> See Appendix One for the full text of the draft Preamble.

<sup>55</sup> Hereafter abbreviated to ABC. The ABC is a state-owned but statutorily independent broadcaster.

<sup>56</sup> Significantly, the Democrats are the most feminised party in Australia. A higher proportion of their members of parliament have been women than in any other party, and they have had a higher percentage of female party leaders than the Liberal, Labor or National parties. They are also the first party with an indigenous Australian deputy party leader. That this party has recently held the balance of power in the parliament may reflect more widespread changes to the roles of women and indigenous people in Australia.

as ‘unarguably, distinctively and dramatically and proudly Australian’ (*The Australian*, 24 March, 1999).

With the draft Preamble lacking the parliamentary support required to see it included in the upcoming republic referendum, however, the Prime Minister entered into negotiations with Australian Democrats, who lobbied to strike ‘mateship’ from the Preamble and to include a reference to aboriginal custodianship (ABC 1999b). The outcome of these negotiations saw a new draft Preamble released in August, 1999.<sup>57</sup> ‘Mateship’ disappeared from the revised Preamble, and the Prime Minister committed his fellow Australians to ‘honouring Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, the nation’s first people, for *their* deep kinship with *their* lands and for *their* ancient and continuing cultures which enrich the life of *our* country’ (emphasis added).

While the revised Preamble represented a victory for those Australians who objected to enshrining a masculine national identity in the Constitution, Gatjil Djerrkura, Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, and other indigenous leaders suggested that the revised document only further weakened the status of the indigenous peoples of Australia (ABC 1999c). This raises the question of whether the battle against the marginalisation of women in the Preamble was won at the expense of the further marginalisation of Australia’s indigenous peoples.

Certainly, what the Preamble debate does demonstrate is that gendered and ethnicised metaphors of nation are hotly contested in contemporary Australia. It is suggestive that gendered and ethnicised representations of nationhood, such as those proposed for the Preamble, surfaced again at a time when the nation faced possible changes to its Constitution, its political structures and its identity, through separation from the British monarchy and the establishment of a fully independent Australian republic. Although the Australian electorate ultimately voted to retain formal links with the British monarchy, debate surrounding the referendum suggests that certain vestiges of historically masculine, ‘white’ discourses of Australian national identity remain today.

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<sup>57</sup> See Appendix Two for the full text of the revised draft Preamble.

*Historically, Japanese national identity has been constructed around notions of racial and cultural uniqueness; however, gendered constructions of national identity have varied with the discursive context.*

Japanese intellectuals have long concentrated on the ‘uniqueness’ of Japan and the Japanese. Popular throughout most of the twentieth century, the *Nihonjinron*, literatures propounding notions of Japanese uniqueness, have centred on the cultural and often racial distinctiveness of the Japanese. These discourses of national identity have been clearly ethnicised; however, the gendering of Japanese discourses of national identity has been less explicit.<sup>58</sup> The *Nihonjinron* and analyses of the *Nihonjinron* have shaped another key premise of this thesis, that historically, discourses of Japanese national identity have been strongly ethnicised, but only implicitly or ambiguously gendered.<sup>59</sup>

Theories of Japanese uniqueness are underpinned by the notion of Japanese ethnic homogeneity. According to the *Nihonjinron*, the Japanese are unique by virtue of their language, customs, psychology, and even their presumed genetic traits. Currently many such discourses are implicitly racialised. However, Morris-Suzuki (1998: 32) argues that notions of the Japanese as a (biological) ‘race’ only developed in Japan out of encounters with Western theories of ‘race’ in the Meiji Era (1868-1912). She suggests that prior to the Meiji Era, Japanese notions of identity centred primarily on ways of life, rather than on biological heredity. Only upon exposure to European theories of ‘race’ did the Japanese develop a racialised self concept; and only then was the name of the nation

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<sup>58</sup>Although relatively little has been written on the gendering of national identity in Japan, the 1990s saw a proliferation of literature on the lived experiences of Japanese women. See Allison (1994), Bernstein (1991), Brinton (1993), Buckley (1997), Fujimura-Fanselow and Kameda (1995), Imamura (1996), Iwao (1993), Kondo (1990, 1997), Martinez (1998), Roberts (1994), Skov and Moeran (1995) and Tamanoi (1998).

<sup>59</sup>Due to difficulties accessing Japanese-language sources, my analysis concentrates on works by Western scholars and by Japanese scholars whose work has been translated into English. However, it must be noted that Japanese scholars have written widely on issues of national identity and on globalisation. In terms of the discourse of national uniqueness, for example, Dale (1986: 14-16) reports that from 1946 to 1978 alone, approximately 700 *Nihonjinron* publications came onto the Japanese market, with 25 percent of these publications appearing in the post-war boom years of the late 1970s when Japanese thinkers were searching for explanations for the nation’s rapid economic growth.

‘transformed into an ethnonym, so that “Japanese” (*Nihonjin*) was seen as a racial designation’ (Morris-Suzuki 1998: 32).

Furthermore, the assumption of racial/ethnic homogeneity has been critiqued by a growing number of Japanese and Western scholars.<sup>60</sup> For not only does this ethnicised discourse of national identity obscure the presence of minority ethnic groups in Japan, it ultimately serves the interests of the Japanese state, by making it possible to ignore the real material disadvantages facing these marginalised groups (see Mouer and Sugimoto 1983, 1986).

Discourses of Japanese uniqueness are usefully characterised as reverse Orientalism. They exoticise Japanese social phenomena through the typical orientalist tropes identified by Said (1978), and yet they invert the effects of these tropes by making the ‘exotic’ a source of nationalist pride. However, the *Nihonjinron* essentialise not only Japan, but also ‘the West’ which is viewed as an undifferentiated (and largely ‘white,’ industrialised and *implicitly* male) Other.

There is at least some explicit gendering of Japanese discourses of national identity, however. One symbol of Japanese national identity which is explicitly gendered is the Sun Goddess. The creation myths found in the eighth century texts, the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki*, explain that sibling gods created the Sun Goddess, who then ruled the earth on her parents’ authority. According to this legend, the grandson of the Sun Goddess became her first descendant to rule the earth; and one of his descendants married the daughter of the Sea God to produce *Jimmu Tennoo*, the founder of the Japanese imperial family. As symbolic mother of the nation, the Sun Goddess features prominently in some explanations of Japanese uniqueness. In 1937, Hoshi Hajime claimed, for instance, that many contemporary Japanese social traits could be traced back to the Sun Goddess. He suggested that the Japanese had inherited from the Sun Goddess the principles of cooperation, hard work, endurance, a concern with welfare and a focus on ‘things eternal’ (Hoshi 1937: ii-10).

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<sup>60</sup> See, for example, Befu (1993), Denoon, et al. (1996), Mouer and Sugimoto (1983, 1986), Weiner (1995, 1997a, 1997b) and Yoshino (1992).

More frequently, however, Japanese discourses of national identity are less explicitly gendered. Dale (1986) argues that much of the *Nihonjinron* implicitly associates Japan with the feminine and the West with the masculine. Dale (1986: 45-51) identifies a number of such gendered dichotomies common in the *Nihonjinron*. While Japan is characterised as feminine or maternal (*taoyameburi*), the West is characterised as masculine or paternal (*masuraoburi*). Following the same logic, Japan is said to be emotional (*kanjooteiki*), a purportedly feminine characteristic, while the West is rational (*gooriteiki*), a trait associated with masculinity. Likewise, the stereotypically feminine principles of peace and harmony are attributed to Japan, while the West is characterised by the more stereotypically masculine bellicosity and rupture. Such gendered typifications continue as Japan is associated with the natural, the world most often tied to women through the biological processes of menstruation, childbirth and breast feeding, while the West is associated with the artificial, the built or *man*-made world. Finally, Japan is characterised as receptive or reactive, a common image of female sexuality, while the West is said to be donative and active, traits associated with phallic pleasure.

The implicit femininity of Japaneseness is further apparent in scholarly discussions of the Japanese language and character. Watanabe Shooichi, an authority on the Japanese language, has characterised native Japanese words as 'soft, like the tender feel of a mother's skin,' while foreign loanwords, now in common usage in Japan, are characterised as 'hard, like the brawny muscles of the father' (Dale 1986: 87). Similarly, Japanese psychoanalysts have associated the West with paternal authority and Japan with maternal indulgence (Dale 1986: 117-19).

As Dale points out, such gendered typifications fail to account for the fatherly figure of the emperor serving as the head of the Japanese family state (*kazoku kokka*). However, Morris-Suzuki argues that the figure of the emperor embodies both the masculine and the feminine (1998: 118-19). She suggests that, like kings in the European tradition, the Emperor in a sense has two bodies, one corporeal and one enduring and spiritual. In his person, the Emperor is both the current ruling son of the

imperial family and the embodiment of his divine ancestor, the Sun Goddess. He is, therefore, both father and mother to the nation.

Just as the Emperor is, symbolically, both male and female, historically, discourses of Japanese national identity have been both masculinised and feminised, depending on the discursive context (Morris-Suzuki 1998: 110-139). Morris-Suzuki demonstrates that discourses of Japaneseness have been alternately masculinised to emphasise the nation's industriousness, its dynamism, and its martial and economic power, and feminised to emphasise its gentility and benign intentions. In this way, Japanese 'notions of femininity and masculinity have been deployed and combined in various ways to create visions of the nation which suited particular historical and political contexts' (Morris-Suzuki 1998: 135). Furthermore, these deployments of gendered discourses have had material consequences in Japan, serving variously to obscure (and thus maintain) gender inequalities, to restrict women to the 'traditional' realm of domestic duties, or to legitimate the expansion of women's public roles (Morris-Suzuki 1998: 110-139).

Since the Meiji era, then, Japanese national identity has been strongly ethnicised to the near total exclusion of ethnic minorities, while gendered metaphors of nation have shifted over time to suit particular social, political and economic conditions. However, as Morris-Suzuki has noted, although the metaphorical gender of the nation has shifted according to context in discourses of Japanese national identity, historically, 'Men were seen as the dynamic face of the nation—the creative, though sometimes disruptive, agents of progress; while women were the face of cultural continuity, a source of stability in a changing world' (1998: 135).

*Globalisation is transforming economic, political and cultural conditions worldwide.*

Like the term 'national identity' discussed in Chapter Two, the term 'globalisation' has a variety of connotations, and therefore requires careful definition here. In state, academic and popular discussions of globalisation, there is widespread disagreement over what globalisation is, when it started and what its outcomes may entail. Among academics,

theorists in fields as diverse as world systems theory, media theory, postmodern theory, cultural studies and international relations draw on globalisation as an explanatory factor; yet, depending on the theoretical perspective, 'globalisation' may refer to the intensifying concentration of global capital, the hegemony of the Western (mainly U.S.) mass media, the destabilisation or liberation of individual and collective identities, the emergence of supra-national political institutions, or all of the above. Following Waters' (1995) detailed explication of the term, I define globalisation here as the increasing interconnectedness of individuals and collective bodies worldwide, in the arenas of the economy, politics and culture. I use this definition as a starting point to establish my next premise: that globalisation is transforming political, economic and cultural conditions worldwide; but that the direction and consequences of these transformations are by no means uniform or unidirectional.

Globalisation is not new. Globalised trade, migration, cultural admixture and other constituent processes of globalisation have their roots in the earliest movements of people, goods and information across the landscapes of pre-history. There are convincing arguments, however, that advances in communication and transportation technologies, particularly in the twentieth century, have led to the dramatic acceleration of globalising social transformations (see Anderson 1983; Giddens 1990; Harvey 1989; Robertson 1990; and Wallerstein 1974).<sup>61</sup> These transformations include such readily observable phenomena as the rapid rise of transnational corporations, the cession of certain state powers to supra-national organisations such as the European Economic Community or the United Nations, and the proliferation of consumer choices of food, fashion, entertainment and lifestyles more generally, at least for more affluent individuals and groups.

In addition to such observable material changes under conditions of globalisation, theorists have argued that globalisation is fundamentally altering the way people experience and understand the world. Notably, Giddens (1990) and Harvey (1989, 1993)

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<sup>61</sup> Although Anderson focuses primarily on 'nationalism,' Giddens on 'modernity,' Harvey on 'postmodernity,' and Wallerstein on the 'capitalist world economy,' each provides insight into the intensification of globalising processes. Robertson discusses the development of globalisation more explicitly.

suggest that advances in transportation and communications technologies have radically changed the nature of spatio-temporal relationships. Developments such as electronic commerce, Internet virtual communities, and live news coverage of events around the world have resulted in 'the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distinct localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring miles away and vice versa' (Giddens 1990: 64).<sup>62</sup>

I do not dispute these readily observable transformations of global social relations. However, two aspects of such theorisations are problematic. The first is that these transformations are by no means uniform. The consequences of globalisation are uneven; globalisation affects people in different social locations in different ways.<sup>63</sup> The second is the implication that such changes result in the destabilisation of individual subjectivity and collective identities. This raises the larger issue of the nature of identity, at the individual or national level.

Hall (1996: 596-97) supports the proposition that the social changes associated with globalisation, or 'late modernity' more generally, are undermining 'the cultural landscapes of class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, and nationality which give us firm locations as social individuals.' In his discussion of national (cultural) identities, he argues that such identities are ever-shifting, inherently unstable. Yet, he concludes that globalisation dislocates and decentres these collective identities.

Globalisation *does* have the effect of contesting and dislocating centred and 'closed' identities of a national culture. It does have a pluralising impact on identities, producing a variety of possibilities and new positions of identification, making identities more positional, more political, more plural and diverse; less fixed, unified or trans-historical (1996: 628, emphasis in original).

This begs the question, however, of what it means for individuals, groups, even nations, to have their identities 'de-centred' and 'dislocated.' Do (or did) identities *ever* have a 'centre' or a fixed location? This uncharacteristic contradiction in Hall's work highlights

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<sup>62</sup> There are similarities here with McLuhan's vision of a mass mediated 'global village,' with its 'heightened human awareness of responsibility' (1967: 5).

<sup>63</sup> I address this point in detail in the next section of this chapter.



an unfortunate blind spot of theorists who suggest that globalising social changes are undermining individual and collective identities and driving an 'identity crisis.' That is, theories of identity crises are necessarily premised on the Enlightenment notion that identities are unified and fixed, when, as I argued in Chapter Two, identities are always in flux, always in the process of becoming.<sup>64</sup>

A further shortcoming of claims of transformed subjectivity is the lack of empirical evidence in support of such claims. While changes to subjectivity are admittedly difficult to measure empirically, the explanations of globalisation outlined above are far removed from the everyday experiences of the very people whose lives (and identities) are supposedly being transformed by globalising processes.

While the academic literature on globalisation is vast and diverse, it is possible to identify two broad visions of the consequences of globalisation: one which stresses wide-scale economic, political and cultural convergence, and often highlights perceived threats to cultural diversity; and one which emphasises the liberating and diversifying effects of globalisation. I draw on both senses of globalisation: I argue that, in some contexts, globalisation promotes a degree of superficial homogenisation; but that political, economic and cultural homogenisation is far from inevitable.

The notion that economic globalisation leads inevitably toward global homogeneity can be traced back to the nineteenth and early twentieth century period of colonialism and industrialisation, when Marx and Engels described the basic features of what is now often called globalisation. In a comment on intensifying global capitalism, Marx and Engels observed that, 'The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere' (1977: 83).

Marx and Engels suggested that the world was moving toward what they called the 'universal interdependence of nations' (1977: 84), with the basis of this

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<sup>64</sup> Hall himself usually stresses the instability of identities/identifications, a feature of his work which has profoundly shaped my understanding of national identities. However, his discussion of the transformation of national identities by globalisation implies that national identities are relatively stable and unified.

interdependence the ever-expanding capitalist world market. They argued that as capitalism pushed its way into every quarter of the world, it brought with it destabilising and homogenising economic, political and cultural changes. In their vision, long-standing local industries and ways of life are choked out by the capitalist mode of production; local desires give way to 'new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes' (1977: 84); markets are standardised and regulated to benefit the bourgeoisie; political power is centralised and mobilised in the service of this bourgeoisie-dominated market; and intellectual diversity is stifled. The future Marx and Engels envisioned was a world system of exploitation and struggle, where less powerful nations and social groups were forced into dependent relations with more powerful nations and social groups. However, Marx and Engels likened capitalism to a sorcerer who realises too late that the powers he has conjured up are beyond his control (1977: 85-86). Just as the conjurer will be swallowed up by the monster of his making, so, Marx and Engels argued, capitalism and the bourgeoisie will succumb to the working class they have created, when a proletarian revolution sweeps them aside.

While the world socialist revolution predicted by Marx and Engels has failed to eventuate, and recent decades have seen the general collapse of communism and the ascendancy of global capitalism, many of these writings describe the character of social, political and economic relations under what is now called globalisation. The continued applicability of Marxian concepts to contemporary conditions of globalisation is evidenced in the work of world systems theorists, principally Wallerstein (1974, 1980, 1991; Wallerstein and Balibar 1991) and Sklair (1995).

Wallerstein, the leading voice of world systems theory, analyses the contemporary world order as a 'capitalist world economy' consisting of core, peripheral and semi-peripheral areas. Drawing on extensive historical examples, Wallerstein (1974) suggests that the current world system emerged in fifteenth century Europe, in a climate of increasing industrialisation, increasing divisions of labour, the transformation from feudal to capitalist modes of agricultural production, and widespread colonisation projects. Under conditions so favourable to the accumulation of capital, he suggests, states became

increasingly centralised with highly developed bureaucracies, allowing them to monopolise the means of legitimate violence, namely, armies and internal policing forces. This maintenance of armed forces both necessitated and facilitated the state's ability to tax the populace, and thus to accumulate more capital, which allowed for still more investment and capitalist development.

Most relevant to the discussion here, however, Wallerstein argues that these early states were effective because they combined centralisation, bureaucratisation and capital accumulation with the homogenisation of the national populace, through the ideologies of religion and culture. These ideologies unified and homogenised national populations, rendering them more amenable to centralised state control.<sup>65</sup> In Wallerstein's formulation, the trends seen in the early capitalist world economy are readily observable today. The current world system, he argues, is characterised by exploitative divisions of labour based not only on class, but also on gender, ethnicity and geography. He argues that powerful core areas currently exploit the cheap labour of the periphery, and to some extent the semi-periphery, and at the same time exploit the unpaid or underpaid labour of women and disadvantaged ethnic groups both at home and abroad (Wallerstein and Balibar 1991).<sup>66</sup>

Sklair (1995) extends and updates world systems theory to take into account not only economic relations within and between nation-states, or the sometimes overly generalised dynamics between global 'capital' and 'labour' which ignore regional specificities, but also the transnational processes, institutions and, importantly, ideologies that he suggests lie at the centre of the current capitalist world order. In Sklair's thesis, the shift toward a 'homogenised capitalist culture' (1995: 167) is facilitated by economic, political and culture-ideological transnational practices. Increasingly powerful

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<sup>65</sup> Wallerstein rejects Weber's thesis (1930) that it was the particular tenets of Protestantism which drove early capital development. Rather, he argues, any mass religion, regardless of its doctrine, could have served to unite national populaces and bring them under state control.

<sup>66</sup> Waters (1995: 25) suggests that because Wallerstein emphasises relations to the near total exclusion of cultural and political relations, global systems theory cannot properly be considered globalisation theory. However, in terms of this thesis, Wallerstein offers insights into the links between nation, culture, and power.

transnational corporations and the transnational capitalist class who own or manage them or support their growth through political or commercial practices, are key figures in this homogenisation process, as are the mass media.

Sklair suggests that it is, in part, through advertising and other media texts that the ideology of consumerism is popularised (1995: 147-85). The spread of this ideology, Sklair argues, works in tandem with the practices of transnational corporations which often undermine local industries and local ways of life, such as subsistence agriculture, bringing locals into the capitalist world market where they must sell their labour and buy the necessities of life they once produced for themselves. In this climate of rapid social change, he argues, the transnational mass media begin to supplant socialising institutions such as the church, school and family, further facilitating the spread of the homogenising ideology of capitalist consumerism.

The critical approach of Marxian theories of global convergence provides valuable insights into the nature of contemporary economic, political and ideological power relations. In particular, it is useful for understanding how the discursive marginalisation of women and ethnic minorities translates into material disadvantage for these groups.<sup>67</sup> However, Marxian homogenisation theories largely fail to acknowledge the possibility of diverse responses to globalising trends. Populations worldwide are not powerless to resist globalisation; recent religious fundamentalist and ethnic-nationalist movements in diverse national contexts exemplify alternative responses to globalisation. Moreover, theories of global convergence rest, in part, on the premise that the consumption of globally available commodities, including mass mediated texts, leads to the homogenisation of subjectivity. However, adopting external cultural or structural/organisational elements does not, in and of itself, comprehensively change the societies, cultures or individuals who adopt them.

A growing number of theorists reject the thesis that globalisation leads to the homogenisation of world cultures, institutions, and social processes.<sup>68</sup> Friedman, for one, critiques current theories of cultural homogenisation, or cultural imperialism, and

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<sup>67</sup> See, in particular, Wallerstein (1991).

<sup>68</sup> See Appadurai (1990), Friedman (1990, 1994a, 1994b), Hall (1992), Pieterse (1995), Robertson (1990, 1992, 1995) and Smith (1990).

suggests instead that the world system has always been characterised by cycles of first the strengthening and then the weakening of a core culture, what he calls the ‘hegemon’ (Friedman 1994a). The current phase of globalisation, he argues, is characterised by the decline of the Western hegemon and the rise of new cultural movements including, among others, identity politics based on language, ethnicity and global political issues such as human rights and the environment; religious diversification involving both new religious cults and a return to religious fundamentalism; and so-called Balkanisation, the division of once politically integrated nation-states into progressively smaller nation-states.

Friedman suggests that this dramatic fragmentation of collective identities is leading to ‘the weakening of former national identities and the emergence of new identities . . . based on “primordial loyalties,” ethnicity, “race,” local community, language and other culturally concrete forms’ (1994a: 86). While Friedman admits that such radical changes may instil a sense of fear in individuals, fear of increased violence, fear of global pandemics, fear of global environmental catastrophes, he argues that the overall effect of hegemon disintegration is a ‘flowering of culture,’ a liberation of identities previously repressed by the dominance of the core (1994a: 233-53). Although I agree with Friedman regarding the complex and uneven outcomes of globalisation, his discussion of identity fragmentation and liberation is premised on the notion of an overly-stabilised or ‘true’ identity which is, by turns, suppressed, broken down and set free.

The pluralisation of identities and the associated phenomenon of cultural pastiche are similarly strong themes in the writing of theorists who view hybridisation as the principal outcome of globalisation. In the literatures of globalisation, postmodernism and cultural studies, ‘hybridisation’ refers to the blending of disparate cultural elements to create new and innovative cultural forms. Hybridisation theorists suggest that globalisation leads not to cultural homogeneity but to increased cultural eclecticism (see Pieterse 1995; Smith 1990). However, the notion of hybridisation is problematic in a number of ways. The term ‘hybridisation’ implies the existence of original, pure or ‘authentic’ cultural forms; it carries with it uncritical assumptions that surface material

transformations translate into deeper cultural transformations; and it elides power relations between core and peripheral cultures through the celebratory rhetoric of voluntary appropriation. More importantly, however, the concept of hybridisation obscures the reality that all contemporary cultures are, to a certain extent, the product of intercultural transactions.<sup>69</sup>

In addition to examining cultural diversification and hybridisation, some globalisation theorists point to the tension between localism and globalism, between particularism and universalism, sameness and difference, as further evidence that globalisation does not lead to cultural homogenisation.<sup>70</sup> Robertson (1995) examines the inherent articulation between the local and the global in his discussion of so-called 'glocalisation,' the inherent connection between globalism and localism. He argues that the global and the local do not represent opposing forces, and that it is impossible to separate the two, in the same way it is impossible to entirely separate macro-level from micro-level phenomena. He therefore rejects the notion that globalisation can be simply described as either homogenising or pluralising.

In sum, then, globalisation is most usefully conceptualised as an 'on-going articulation between global and local processes' (Friedman 1994a: 12). The local is shaped by the global, even as the global is shaped by the local. As Waters (1995) has noted, this is part of the Janus-faced nature of globalisation: it both unifies and diversifies economic, political and cultural realms worldwide; it is both outward-looking and future-oriented, endlessly seeking the new and exotic, and increasingly concerned with local 'traditions,' cultural roots and 'authenticity.' Globalisation is neither unidirectional nor uniform. It transforms political, economic and cultural relations in diverse and complex ways.

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<sup>69</sup> Iwabuchi (1998), Parry (1994), Pieterse (1995) and Thomas (1994) discuss the limitations of 'hybridisation' theories in greater detail.

<sup>70</sup> See for example Appadurai (1990) on the tensions between different kinds of 'global flows' (of people, finance, technology and so on).

*Globalisation affects different people in different ways.*

As noted above, the consequences of globalisation are uneven. Scholars have suggested that globalisation has differential effects on individuals and collectivities, depending on such factors as geographic location/country of origin, class location, ethnicity and gender.<sup>71</sup> In this thesis I am particularly interested in the effects of globalisation on women and ethnic minorities.

Some feminist theorists argue that women are disproportionately disadvantaged by globalisation.<sup>72</sup> They suggest that as more countries are drawn into capitalist relations, more women are trebly exploited: first as workers in often underpaid and insecure positions; second, as mothers and wives working, unpaid, to reproduce and maintain the labour force; and third, as the primary household consumers targeted by advertisers.

While globalisation affects women in different social locations differently, most empirical evidence suggests that it disproportionately disadvantages poor women in the Third World. In addition to increased economic exploitation, these women often suffer increased sexual exploitation and violence under conditions of globalisation. As women in developing nations take jobs in the factories of multinational corporations, they often face sexual harassment in their workplaces and increased violence in their homes (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 2001). As the disparity in wealth between First and Third World nations increases, a growing number of women move from poorer to richer nations to work as domestic servants and sex workers, again often making them targets of exploitation (Pettman 1996). Furthermore, cheaper and more convenient international travel has facilitated the growth of so-called sextourism, particularly in South East Asia, where local sex workers cater to affluent foreign tourists (Muroi and Sasaki 1997; Richter 1989).

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<sup>71</sup> For discussion of the differential effects of globalisation, including issues of colonialism, international relations and 'development' programs, see Enloe (1990), Kofman and Youngs (1996), Massey (1994), Mies (1998) and Wallerstein and Ballibar (1991).

<sup>72</sup> See especially Brettell and Sergent (2001: 507-511), Enloe (1990), Kofman and Youngs (1996) and Mies (1998).

While this empirical evidence suggests that poor women in the Third World have faced increased exploitation under globalised conditions, some researchers have documented the ways globalisation has led to increased status for women in the Third World. For instance, Lockwood (2001) and Wilson-Moore (2001) report improvements to the status of women in Third World countries when globalising market reforms are not accompanied by the importation of Western patriarchal ideology. Furthermore, Krause (1996) argues that increasing global feminist alliances are leading to improvements in women's rights in many national contexts, in both more affluent and less affluent nations.

Empirical evidence suggests, furthermore, that ethnic minorities in many national contexts are negatively affected by globalisation. Marxian theorists suggest that globalised capitalism relies on the cheap labour of marginalised social groups (Wallerstein 1991). These include not only women but ethnic Others; that is both the Others to the capitalist industrialised North (namely, the peoples of the so-called Third World), and nations' internal Others, including refugees, 'guest workers,' low-caste 'untouchables,' and indigenous peoples, among other marginalised minorities. Evidence suggests that under globalising conditions ethnic Others are increasingly exploited as workers and consumers. Furthermore, as globalisation destabilises long-standing systems of production, newly disenfranchised groups frequently target ethnic Others as the imagined cause of their waning economic and political power (White 1998).

Out of my review of the scholarship which documents such differential effects of globalisation, I developed an expectation that guided my interview process: I predicted that individuals in different social locations in Australia and Japan would experience and respond to globalisation differently. I began conducting interviews and focus groups with the expectation that those social groups who were more economically and politically threatened by globalising changes would construct more negative accounts of globalisation than those who stood to benefit from globalisation. For example, I anticipated that primary producers whose commodity prices have dropped substantially under globalisation and factory workers in declining industrial sectors would view globalisation less positively than individuals whose livelihoods depended on increased



globalisation, or entailed the promotion of globalisation. However, as evidence presented in Chapter Seven will show, my expectations were not wholly supported by the empirical data. The data do indicate, however, that participants recognise the complexities and contradictions of globalisation and its diverse effects on their lives.

*Australian multiculturalism is a set of authorised discourses aimed at managing internal ethnic diversity in a context of increasing globalisation.*

In recent years globalisation has featured prominently in Australian state discourses in relation to cultural, economic and political issues. These discourses have centred, in large part, around multiculturalism. In Australian state discourses, multiculturalism has been conceptualised, variously, as ‘a term which describes the cultural and ethnic diversity of contemporary Australia;’ a policy which ‘seeks to ensure that diversity is a positive force in our society;’ and a policy which ‘manages the consequences of this diversity in the interests of the individual and society as a whole’ (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 1998). The very imprecision of this term has added to its political utility, by allowing different people to use it in different ways under different conditions. In the interests of analytical precision, however, I conceptualise multiculturalism as the ethnic diversification of the Australian population and the policies designed to manage that diversification. As such, I understand multiculturalism as one specific national response to recent globalising social changes.

Australia has experienced dramatic ethnic diversification since World War II. Prior to the war, the so-called ‘White Australia’ policy effectively prevented ‘non-white,’ non-English-speaking migrants from permanently settling in Australia. In the decades following the end of World War II, however, Australian immigration policy was substantially revised. With the memory of Hitler’s ‘final solution’ fresh in their minds, many Australian policy makers grew uncomfortable with overtones of Aryan supremacy in the discourse of ‘White Australia’ (White 1981: 157-61). A new policy was sought, a policy which eschewed ‘race’-based discrimination, but which nonetheless promised to protect the nation from being inundated with ‘non-white’ (particularly Asian) migrants, a

deep-seated fear amongst 'white' Australians since the earliest days of colonisation, and one intensified by Japanese attacks on the Australian coast during World War II.

Beginning in the late 1940s and 1950s, Australia recruited 'white' migrants from Britain and northern Europe, in an attempt to shore up the national population and provide labour for large-scale public works and industrialisation projects. Later, when the flow of these northern European migrants slowed to a trickle, migrants were recruited from southern Europe and eventually Turkey, Syria and Lebanon (Lack and Templeton 1995: 74-75). Policy makers reassured the 'white' English-speaking population that, under a policy of assimilation, these ethnically diverse migrants would blend seamlessly into 'white' Australian society.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, there was a growing awareness that migrants were not assimilating as flawlessly as government rhetoric suggested. Social scientists highlighted the problems of migrant poverty and lack of access to social services, and urged a reconsideration of assimilationist policies.<sup>73</sup> In the early 1970s, services for migrants were expanded, and in 1973, the language of assimilation was dropped in favour of the term 'multiculturalism,' borrowed from Canada (Lack and Templeton 1995: 90). While early multicultural policies stressed the pleasures of ethnic diversity, the food, festivals and art of migrant communities, by the late 1970s the state officially recognised the need for expanded government programs to assist migrants with the material challenges they faced (Lack and Templeton 1995: 91). Successive governments focused multicultural discourses and policies on both preserving a diversity of 'cultural identities' in Australia and promoting 'social justice,' equity and political engagement for all Australians. By the early 1990s, however, growing public criticism of multiculturalism prompted the Keating government to identify another goal of multiculturalism, the promotion of so-called 'productive diversity,' the effective, and economically profitable, utilisation of the skills of Australia's diverse population (Office of Multicultural Affairs 1988).

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<sup>73</sup> See for instance Jupp (1966) and Martin (1972, 1978).

Starting in the late 1970s and early 1980s, multicultural policy had come under fire from a number of quarters. In response to increased Asian immigration, stemming from the Indochinese refugee crisis of the late 1970s, political conservatives decried the ‘Asianisation’ of Australia. Geoffrey Blainey, perhaps the most high-profile critic of Asian immigration, argued in his widely-discussed *All for Australia* (1984), that Asian immigration was socially disruptive because of irreconcilable cultural differences between ‘Asians’ and ‘Australians’ (both largely conceived to be homogeneous groups), and because Asian migrants increased the competition for increasingly scarce jobs. As global economic restructuring led to widespread deindustrialisation and rising unemployment in Australia in the late 1980s and 1990s, other conservative critics of multicultural policy echoed Blainey’s arguments. Such rhetoric was rekindled in the mid-1990s when Pauline Hanson’s One Nation party branded immigration (particularly Asian immigration) a cultural and economic threat to Australian society.

However, critics of multicultural policy have not been drawn exclusively from the political right. Some left-leaning intellectuals have critiqued multicultural policy as an ideological tool which obscures class-based inequalities and divides the working class into less powerful ethnic sub-groups. According to such critiques, multiculturalism ‘mystifies the structural sources of oppression by suggesting that, for example, an Italian industrialist and an Italian steelworker have more in common with each other than a Greek steelworker and an Italian steelworker’ (Sawer 1990: 27). Likewise, such critics have suggested that the discourses and policies of multiculturalism serve as cost-effective distractions from structural inequalities based on class, gender and ethnicity which could only effectively be addressed through costly state intervention. In other words, multiculturalism provides policy makers and powerful elites with an inexpensive symbol of their own generosity and magnanimous tolerance, and absolves them of responsibility for social inequalities from which they benefit (Betts 1993; Hage 1998; Thakur 1994).

Furthermore, recent critics of multiculturalism argue that there is an inherent contradiction in such policies: that is, multiculturalists cannot uphold the core value of tolerance for all without also tolerating bastions of intolerance, such as neo-Nazi groups.

Fish (1997) for instance, argues that ultimately, multiculturalism can be only a shallow commitment to surface diversity. He describes 'the multiculturalism of ethnic restaurants, weekend festivals, and high profile flirtations with the other . . . characterised by its superficial or cosmetic relationship to the objects of its affection,' what he calls 'boutique multiculturalism' (1997: 78). That multiculturalism has faced criticism from both the political right and the political left is indicative of both the instability of the concept and the perceived scope of multicultural programs.

I conceptualise discourses of multiculturalism as strategies for managing internal ethnic diversity in a context of increasing globalisation. Significantly, authorised discourses of multiculturalism reinforce 'white' dominance in Australia in two ways. They institutionalise categories of difference (both by dichotomising 'us' and 'them' and by institutionalising practices which sustain ethnic inequalities); and they position 'whites' as the governors of the nation, those with the right, the responsibility and the power to decide who to tolerate and who to reject.<sup>74</sup> At the same time, however, discourses of multiculturalism reflect and generate challenges to 'white' domination, challenges which reshape gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity.

*Japanese internationalisation is a set of authorised discourses designed to facilitate exchanges between Japan and 'the outside world' in a context of globalisation.*

In Japan, recent state responses to globalisation have focused largely on *kokusaika* (internationalisation), broadly defined as the opening up of Japan to foreign people, commodities and ways of life, and the programs which regulate these changes. While both Australian multiculturalism and Japanese internationalisation are responses to globalisation, Australian multiculturalism is primarily inwardly-focused, concentrating on domestic affairs, while Japanese internationalisation is largely outwardly-focused, concentrating on economic, political and cultural engagement beyond its national borders. It should be stressed, however, that 'domestic' and 'international' issues are not wholly

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<sup>74</sup> See Hage's (1998) discussion of 'evil white nationalists' (those who want to exclude certain groups from the national community on the basis of their 'race'/ethnicity), and 'good white nationalists' (those who celebrate ethnic diversity, yet in so doing reinforce the notion of white supremacy).

distinct. As argued earlier, there is an inherent articulation between the global/international and the local/national. Additionally, the outcomes of policies of Australian multiculturalism and Japanese internationalisation have not always neatly corresponded with the stated aims of those policies.

As with multiculturalism, understandings of Japanese internationalisation are both vague and varied. Internationalisation has been defined, variously, as ‘social phenomena which take place as a result of international exchange;’ ‘the expansion of the movement across national boundaries of goods, capital, information, people, and culture;’ an attempt to ‘introduce international elements to a country or people with the least friction with their identity;’ ‘a process of opening Japan’s heart to the outside world;’ and ‘the process of becoming accepted by the rest of the world’ (Ehara 1992; Sugiyama 1992).

Befu (1983: 232-33) notes that although it is difficult to determine just when the term *kokusaika* (internationalisation) first appeared in the Japanese vernacular, it became more visible in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Although related terms, such as *gurobaruka* (globalisation) and *dochakuka* (indigenisation or glocalisation) have been in circulation alongside *kokusaika*, none encompasses the wide range of social phenomena implied by *kokusaika*. While *gurobaruka* refers almost exclusively to the worldwide standardisation of systems of management and manufacture, and *dochakuka* refers to the niche-marketing of commodities for increasingly differentiated markets around the world, *kokusaika* encompasses the diverse economic, political and cultural changes associated with globalisation as I have defined it.

Japan has long engaged in international diplomatic and trade relations (McCormack 1996); however, it was after the nation’s period of self-imposed isolation, the so-called *sakoku* of 1639 to 1868, that Japan’s level of international engagement increased dramatically. Since the Meiji era (1868-1912), the state has had varied approaches to international engagement, each with its own all-embracing slogan. These ranged from ‘civilisation and enlightenment’ (*bunmei kaika*) and ‘Westernisation’ (*seiyooka*) in the Meiji era, to the ‘Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere’ (*daitooa kyooeiken*) before and during World War II, ‘democratisation’ (*minshuka*) in the 1950s, ‘modernisation’

(*kindaika*) of the 1960s, and, finally, ‘internationalisation’ (*kokusaika*) from the 1970s onward.<sup>75</sup> In 1984, then Prime Minister Nakasone declared Japan an ‘international state’ (*kokusai kokka*) (Itoh 1998); and, since that time, ‘internationalisation’ has become a cherished slogan of state, business and academic elites, as well as the popular media.

As Ogata (1992: 64) has pointed out, internationalisation has come to be seen by many as a ‘panacea’ for the economic, political and cultural conflicts which have arisen under conditions of accelerating globalisation. In the mid-1990s, for instance, then Japanese Prime Minister Hashimoto identified internationalisation as a key to raising Japan’s regional and global political profile, to enriching the nation’s educational system, to stimulating Japanese culture, and, more generally, to ensuring Japan’s ‘prosperity and security’ in the 21st century (Hashimoto 1996).

However, critics of Japanese internationalisation suggest that it fuels nationalist sentiment. Japan’s increased global economic engagement in the decades since World War II has bolstered national confidence and national pride, but, as Befu (1983) argues, it has also challenged long-standing notions of Japanese national identity. He suggests that discourses of Japanese uniqueness represent a response to these challenges to Japanese identity. He argues, therefore, that internationalisation has led to increased national chauvinism, so that ‘the very processes of internationalisation which are supposedly making Japanese more cosmopolitan have the unexpected effect of making Japanese more nationalistic. . . . Internationalisation promotes “anti-internationalisation”’ (Befu 1983: 241).

I conceive of internationalisation as a set of authorised discourses designed to facilitate exchanges between Japan (constructed as an essentialised whole) and ‘the outside world’ (a largely undifferentiated Other) in a context of increasing globalisation. Like Australian multiculturalism, Japanese internationalisation has somewhat contradictory outcomes. On the one hand, it facilitates contact with non-Japanese people, commodities and ideas, contact which is perceived by some Japanese as a threat to

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<sup>75</sup> See Befu (1993), Hook and Weiner (1992), Itoh (1998), Katou (1992) and Mannari and Befu (1993).

‘traditional’ ways of life and to Japanese national identity.<sup>76</sup> On the other hand, discourses of internationalisation are inherently discourses of ‘us’ and ‘them’ (*wareware Nihonjin*’ and *‘mukoo no kata’*), which reinforce ethnicised and gendered discourses of Japanese national identity.

*I derive five key dimensions of Australian and Japanese national identity from my reading of authorised discourses.*

As detailed below, I employ five key analytical categories in my analysis of discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan. I derived these analytical categories from both my reading of the authorised discourses addressed in this chapter, and from the mass mediated and folk discourses I address in subsequent chapters. I am not suggesting that folk and mass mediated discourses are determined by authorised discourses, or vice versa; however, there is considerable overlap between these discourses of national identity. This overlap suggests that authorised discourses establish the terms of reference used in on-going negotiations of national identity in Australia and Japan.

Starting with Hall’s (1992: 293) description of narratives of nation, as ‘set[s] of *stories, images, landscapes, scenarios, historical events, national symbols and rituals* which stand for or represent the shared experiences . . . which give meaning to the nation’ (emphasis added), I have identified five key dimensions of mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan. These dimensions are as follows: *social relationships and social ethics; material and symbolic culture; the environment; leisure practices and everyday practices; and the national character and national archetypes.*

Social relations and social ethics are an important focus of authorised discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan, from scholarly writings and political discourses about Australian egalitarianism to *Nihonjinron* explications of the Japanese principle of ‘groupism.’ Social relationships and social ethics are also a recurrent theme in folk and mass mediated discourses of national identity. I define *social relationships*

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<sup>76</sup> Ms. Honda’s comments in Chapter One exemplify such perceptions.

*and social ethics* as the modes of social organisation and broad patterns of social interaction constructed as ‘typical’ of the national community, and the underlying ethical principles which inform social action in the national community. Specifically, these include references to the following: relations between family members, coworkers or friends; long-standing rules of social interaction; and more recent social ethics, such as multiculturalism in Australia or internationalisation in Japan.

Folk and mass mediated discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan also centre on *material and symbolic culture*. Although the term ‘culture’ is a highly contested term in the social sciences, I define material and symbolic culture as the manufactured or modified objects customarily used or consumed by the national populace; the language, dialect or other linguistic practices or forms distinctive to the national populace; and nationally recognised art forms and artists. Specifically, these include the following: references to the ‘typical’ foods and clothing of the populace, such as meat pies and Akubra hats in Australia or *sushi* and *kimono* in Japan, and to national flags and currencies; distinctive linguistic forms such as ‘G’day’ in Australia or the three writing systems of Japanese language; and both contemporary and historical art forms and the artists who create(d) them, such as the poetry of Andrew Barton (Banjo) Paterson and the music of John Farnham in Australia, or calligraphy, tea ceremony and the popular singing group SMAP in Japan. Authorised discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan also centre, in part, on material and symbolic culture. Examples can be found in the staging of Australianness and Japaneseness in the opening ceremonies of the 2000 Sydney Olympics and the 1998 Nagano Olympics. In these authorised discourses of nation, the costumes, art forms and artists of the two nations featured prominently, including Akubra hats and Dri’zabone coats in Australia, *hachimaki* (headbands), *hapi* (short cotton jackets) and *mawashi* (loincloths) in Japan, and prominent musicians in both countries.

Australianness and Japaneseness are also evoked through references to *the environment*, the natural and built spaces and features of those spaces (such as flora and fauna) which serve as affective symbols of the nation; references to the spatial boundaries



which serve as markers of identity boundaries; and references to the ways natural and built spaces shape human action and forms of social organisation. A growing number of scholars examine the links between space, place and identity.<sup>77</sup> As Thomas (1999: xvii) has observed, 'Space is central to studies of all human societies, as it is in space that we are tied into the life world of both present and past.' Likewise, mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan frequently centre on distinctive landscapes and landmarks, such as Bondi Beach and the outback in Australia, and Hokkaido's Tokachi Plains and Osaka Castle in Japan; on images of distinctive flora and fauna, such as kangaroos and koalas in Australia, and cherry blossoms in Japan; and on the ways Australia's harsh climate and Japan's small size have shaped the character of their respective peoples.

National identity is further evoked in Australian and Japanese mass mediated and folk discourses through references to distinctive leisure practices and everyday practices.<sup>78</sup> The connection between consumption practices, including leisure practices, and identity has a long history in the social scientific literature. As Veblen (1970) noted, leisure practices have been key to the shaping of modern individual and collective identities. Leisure pursuits, from mundane domestic practices such as television viewing, to larger scale public events and spectacles, such as sport contests, are markers of membership in a particular community, class, even nation. Australian discourses of national identity include references to such leisure practices as surfing, swimming, bushwalking, playing Australian Rules football and cricket, and having barbecues. Japanese discourses include references to leisure activities such as learning *kendo* and *ikebana*, going to hot springs or public baths, and playing golf, baseball, *pachinko* (best described as a cross between pinball and a slot machine), and *fami-con* (home computer games). Additionally, both Australian and Japanese discourses of national identity

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<sup>77</sup> See, for example, Agnew and Duncan (1989), Cohen (1982), Morley and Robins (1995), Shields (1991) and Thomas (1999).

<sup>78</sup> Due to differences between mass mediated and folk discourses, and the methods used to analyse them, I apply the analytical category of 'leisure practices' to mass mediated discourses, and 'everyday practices' to folk discourses. My reasons for doing so are explained in greater detail in Chapter Five.

include references to the paid or unpaid labour, and the long-standing ritual behaviours (or ‘customs’) said to be common throughout the nation. References to such practices, along with references to leisure practices, are referred to as ‘everyday practices’ in Chapters Five and Six.

Finally, discourses of national identity frequently include references to the *national character and national archetypes*.<sup>79</sup> Kapferer (1996: 41) has described *national archetypes* as the ‘personages in whom character traits which are thought to be central in the generation of [the national] society, and of history itself are gathered up and concentrated.’ *National character*, likewise, refers to the presumed personality or character traits of the national citizenry. Specifically, the ANZAC, Crocodile Dundee and the ‘Aussie battler’ (the hard-working, usually working class, Australian) feature prominently in Australian folk and mass mediated discourses of national identity; and the *kimono*-clad wife and mother and the ‘salaryman’ (a salaried, and usually overworked, male employee) appear in Japanese folk and mass mediated discourses of national identity. Likewise, the recent Olympics in Sydney and Nagano provide examples of the use of national archetypes in authorised discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan. Two powerful symbols of national identity in these opening ceremonies were the ‘Man from Snowy River’ in Australia<sup>80</sup> and the sumo wrestler in Japan, who served to convey, respectively, the frontier spirit and dogged determination of Australians, and the discipline, the ‘tradition’ and quiet strength of the Japanese.

In the chapters which follow, the above analytical categories are used as constructs to provide a fuller understanding of gendered and ethnicised mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan. Each of these analytical categories represents one way discourses of national identity are structured. However, it is worthwhile noting that neither the mass mediated texts nor the research participants

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<sup>79</sup> I have used the category of ‘national character and national archetypes’ only in my analysis of folk discourses of national identity. My reasons for doing so are explained in greater detail in Chapter Five.

<sup>80</sup> ‘The Man from Snowy River’ character comes from the Banjo Paterson poem of the same name, and has been the basis of a feature film and an Australian television series.

themselves explicitly identified such categories. Rather, the dimensions of national identity discussed here represent my ordering of these discourses.

### Summary of Analytical Framework

In this and the preceding chapters I have reviewed a range of authorised discourses of national identity and globalisation, and developed from them the analytical framework I apply to my subsequent analysis of mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan. For the sake of clarity, I conclude with a summary of that analytical framework.

First, I have argued that just as nations are, in part, constituted through practices of representation, national identities are discursively constructed. Discourses of national identity are, inherently, stories of 'us' and 'them,' and as such are practices of inclusion and exclusion. Hegemonic discourses of national identity are inscribed with, and reinscribe, ideology. Thus, these discourses may be used in the exercise of power to sustain relations of domination. However, counter-narratives may be used to challenge current power relations.

Specifically, in widely circulating discourses, Australian and Japanese national identity are discursively gendered and ethnicised in ways which mirror and maintain social inequalities. This marginalisation of women and ethnic minorities in narratives of nation both reflects social hierarchies, and legitimates and thus reinforces the material disadvantage of these groups. At the same time, such discourses and the social structures they help reproduce are not static or incontestable. Counter-narratives challenge and potentially reshape both widely circulating discourses and the material conditions they mirror and help maintain.

My insistence on the contestability of these discourses grows out of my reading of diverse scholarly literatures which stress the significance of discursive process to the formation of national identities. Barthes (1972) argues that national identities are constituted through mythic interpellation. Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) suggest that

people constantly invent and re-invent national 'traditions' by drawing selectively on historical resources in the light of current events. Yeatman (1990) argues that national social orders are constituted largely through discursive practices which translate into material practices. Hage (1998) discusses the fluid and negotiated character of the ethnic categories that are central to national imaginaries. And Said (1978) explores the self-Other dialectic as it applies to national identities: there can be no national 'self' without a national 'Other.' Following these authors, I argue that national identities are negotiated, contestable and fluid. The fluidity of discourses of national identity suggests that while widely circulating discourses may naturalise and help sustain current hierarchies of power, counter narratives have the potential to reflect and contribute to changes in power relations.

In order to examine the place of globalisation in constructions of national identity, I have discussed the nature of globalisation more generally. I have argued that globalisation is transforming economic, political and cultural relations worldwide, but not in uniform or predictable ways. Depending on the particular context, globalisation may lead to homogenisation or diversification, it may push toward innovation or toward perceived 'tradition.' Australian multiculturalism and Japanese internationalisation represent two specific national responses to globalising social changes, responses that in some instances challenge and in some instances reinforce particular forms of the discursive gendering and ethnicisation of these nations.

Drawing on my engagement with authorised discourses of national identity and my analysis of the folk and mass mediated discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan, I have identified five key dimensions of national identity. References to social relations and social ethics, material and symbolic culture, the environment, leisure practices and everyday practices, and the national character and national archetypes are found throughout the overlapping authorised, mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity analysed here.

The analytical framework outlined above guides my interpretations of the empirical data presented in subsequent chapters. In Chapters Four through Six I

empirically examine the particular ways gendered and ethnicised national identities are constituted through mass mediated and folk discourses in Australia and Japan.

Furthermore, I explore the complex ways these discourses reflect, reinforce and challenge the marginalisation women and ethnic minorities.

Finally, in Chapter Seven I examine the place of globalising processes in Australian and Japanese participants' discourses of national identity. I have argued that the destabilisation of individual and national identities suggested by globalisation theorists is premised on a problematic notion of unified and fixed identities. In this chapter, therefore, the focus of inquiry shifts from the question of *whether* national identities are being undermined by globalisation, to *how* participants experience and perceive globalisation in relation to national identity.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### GENDERED AND ETHNICISED NATIONAL IDENTITY IN MASS MEDIATED DISCOURSES: CONTENT ANALYSIS AND AUDIENCE RESPONSES

As I have already argued, discourses of national identity are negotiated in a variety of contexts, ranging from face-to-face interactions to political rhetoric, scholarly research, and mass mediated texts. I begin my analysis of Australian and Japanese discourses of gendered and ethnicised national identity with an examination of television advertisements, because, as noted in Chapter Two, advertisements provide aestheticised articulations of social ideals and values, and thus serve as a rich source of narratives of nation.

At the heart of this enterprise is the first of my research questions: *how are gendered and ethnicised national identities constituted?* In the first part of this chapter, I present a content analysis of a sample of 966 Australian and Japanese television advertisements, coding for the gender and ethnicity of principal characters, the nature and setting of the activities in which the characters are engaged, and representations of national identity. In the second part of the chapter, I discuss audience responses to a selection of advertisements shown to Australian and Japanese focus groups. Specifically, I analyse responses to questionnaires in which focus group participants were asked to judge the ‘Australianness’ or ‘Japaneseness’ of the advertisements. Finally, I note the context in which these constructions of national identity are generated in Australia and Japan.

#### Content Analysis

##### *Sample and coding categories*

The sample encompasses a total of 373 Australian advertisements, and 593 Japanese advertisements. The Australian sample consists of all the advertisements appearing on two regional Tasmanian stations, WIN TV (8:00 AM to midnight on October 1, 1996) and Southern Cross Television (8:00 AM to midnight on January 23, 1997). The Japanese sample consists of all the advertisements aired on two regional Hokkaido

stations, HBC (8:00 AM to midnight on April 20, 1995) and STV (8:00 AM to midnight on July 13, 1995). Both the Australian and Japanese samples include one spring and one summer broadcast day, approximately three months apart, with both samples containing a broadcast day in a week leading up to a national holiday.

I narrowed the sample to those advertisements which include at least one foregrounded adult male or female.<sup>81</sup> I also excluded advertisements containing only children, animated characters, and/or characters whose gender could not be discerned, as well as station and movie promotions, the former because they present difficulties in terms of gender classifications, and the latter because they are more akin to full-length television programs than to advertisements. The resulting sample included 250 Australian advertisements and 466 Japanese advertisements. After several rounds of coding, as described below, I then further narrowed the sample to those advertisements which I judged to make appeals to national identity. This left a sample of 114 Australian advertisements and 185 Japanese advertisements.

As noted in Chapter Three, I have identified several recurrent themes in mass mediated discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan, themes centring on *social relationships and social ethics, material and symbolic culture, the environment, and leisure practices*. In applying these analytical categories to my sample of television advertisements, I have not assumed a simple one-to-one correspondence between signs and their intended meanings, for advertisements are polysemic, with complex interrelations between the signs employed. Rather I consider the overall discursive effects of the advertisements, what Goffman (1979) has termed the ‘gestalt,’ to be more central to the generation of meaning; therefore each advertisement (rather than individual signs within each advertisement) is treated as a unit of analysis. It should be noted that advertisements can, and frequently do, make use of multiple appeals to national identity. An advertisement presenting a surfer at Bondi Beach, for example, makes appeals to Australianness based on both leisure practices and the environment, just as an

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<sup>81</sup> For the purpose of this analysis, ‘foregrounded’ characters are characters which feature prominently. Therefore, advertisements showing only crowd scenes with no prominent characters were excluded.

advertisement featuring a *kimono*-clad woman viewing cherry blossoms appeals to Japaneseness on the basis of both material culture and the environment. In cases where the subtleties of representation made particular advertisements more difficult to code, I sought the advice of Australian and Japanese viewers whose interpretations guided the final coding.

### *General patterns in the representation of national identities*

Although Australian and Japanese advertisers use similar conventions to evoke a sense of national belonging, there are differences in the frequency with which these conventions are employed (Figure 4.1). In the sample of Australian advertisements, Australianness was most often represented through images of leisure and the environment. This is consistent with those authorised discourses, discussed earlier, which have constructed Australians as easy-going, leisure-loving people. Images of the environment were also much more common in the Australian sample than in the Japanese sample, reflecting the symbolic salience of the physical environment in the Australian national imaginary.

In the Japanese sample, Japaneseness was most often represented through images of social relations and social ethics, suggesting a widespread perception that Japanese social cohesiveness is a distinguishing national feature. Just as ‘groupism,’ ‘community,’ ‘duties’ and ‘dependence’ are recurring themes in the authorised discourses of the *Nihonjinron* (Dale 1986), social relatedness is a central theme in mass mediated discourses of national identity.



**Figure 4.1 Patterns in the Representation of National Identity  
in Japanese and Australian Television Advertisements**

	<b>Images of the environment %</b>	<b>Images of leisure activities %</b>	<b>Images of material and symbolic culture %</b>	<b>Images of social relations and social ethics %</b>	<b>Total %</b>
<b>Representations of Australian national identity (n=148<sup>82</sup>)</b>	18	34	22	26	100
<b>Representations of Japanese national identity (n=215)</b>	6	19	35	40	100

*Gendered discourses of national identity*

The overall patterns of representation described above suggest which conventions are most central to mass mediated discourses of Japaneseness and Australianness. The next task of this chapter is to examine the extent to which these discourses are gendered and ethnicised. To this end, advertisements were coded by the gender and ethnicity of the carrier of national identity. The 'carrier' is defined as the central person engaged with the analytical categories noted above: the person situated in a certain physical environment; the person involved in distinctive leisure activities; the historical figure; the person practising 'traditional' arts or occupations; the person wearing a distinctive national costume or using distinctive linguistic forms; the person associated with selected artefacts, such as the national flag; or the person who engages in particular social relations or enacts certain social ethics.

Overall, the results of the analysis demonstrate that in the sample of television advertisements, men are more likely than women to be the carriers of Australianness,

<sup>82</sup> As noted above, advertisements frequently use more than one kind of appeal to national identity. Advertisements were first coded for the kinds of appeals they utilised. Then all instances of each coding category (environment, leisure, and so on) were tallied. Out of 185 Japanese advertisements, there were 215 appeals to national identity. Out of 114 Australian advertisements, there were 148 appeals to national identity.

while women are more likely than men to be the carriers of Japaneseness (Figure 4.2). There is also a conspicuous difference between the Australian and Japanese data in the number of advertisements in which national identity is carried by both male and female characters. The smaller number of Japanese advertisements in which both men and women are carriers of national identity is consistent with the more highly differentiated social realms of males and females in Japan.

**Figure 4.2 Gender of Carriers of National Identity in Australian and Japanese Television Advertisements<sup>83</sup>**

	Male %	Female %	Both %	Total %
Carrier of Australianness (n=114)	38	19	43	100
Carrier of Japaneseness (n=185)	33	38	29	100

What these numbers do not reveal, however, is the nature of these representations. Women in the Japanese sample are about three times more likely than men to embody Japaneseness through domestic activities, with, for example, *kimono*-clad housewives teaching their daughters how to cook, or preparing meals for husbands returning from the office. Men, on the other hand, are about three times more likely to embody Japaneseness through their leisure activities, such as playing golf or *pachinko*, learning *kendo*, or practising *karate*. Furthermore, men embodying Japaneseness are almost twice as likely to be shown engaged in paid labour as are women embodying Japaneseness (Figure 4.3).

<sup>83</sup> Percentages are provided for the following: ‘Male,’ advertisements in which the national identity was carried by *only* foregrounded adult males; ‘Female,’ advertisements in which the national identity was carried by *only* foregrounded adult females; and ‘Both,’ advertisements in which national identity was carried by *both* foregrounded adult males and females.

Figure 4.3 Japaneseness by Gender and Nature of Activity

	Domestic Activity (Number of Advertisements)	Leisure Activity (Number of Advertisements)	Paid Labour (Number of Advertisements)
Men	7	17	37
Women	23	5	19

Furthermore, men in the advertisements are more likely than women (by a ratio of 3:2) to embody national identity in contemporary Japanese settings, while women are more likely than men (by a ratio of 5:4) to embody Japaneseness in a ‘traditional’ setting (Figure 4.4). So, while men are portrayed, for example, as company executives, baseball players, and rock stars, women are more typically portrayed as *kimono*-clad brides, *geisha*, or teachers of tea ceremony.

Figure 4.4 Japaneseness by Gender and Setting

	Contemporary Culture/Society (Number of Advertisements)	‘Traditional’ Culture/Society (Number of Advertisements)
Men	15	19
Women	10	25

In sum, in the sample of Japanese advertisements, women are represented in ways that emphasise their unpaid domestic labour, their passivity and their subservience to others. In addition, the frequent positioning of women in ‘traditional’ and domestic settings rather than contemporary and public settings elides their active contributions to contemporary public life. Such representations both mirror patriarchal power relations in Japan, and reinforce them.

The Australian advertisements also show marked gender differences in the ways men and women embody national identity (Figure 4.5). Similar to trends found in the Japanese sample, Australian women in the sample of advertisements are more than four times as likely as their male counterparts to embody Australianness through their

domestic roles. Women are shown at home, for example, teaching young children to read, or preparing snacks for their children returning home from school. Also like the Japanese sample, Australian men are much more likely to demonstrate their Australianness through their leisure activities than women, whom they outnumber four to one as they surf, cycle, or share a beer with their ‘mates.’ They also outnumber women two to one in representations of paid labour.

**Figure 4.5 Australianness by Gender and Nature of Activity**

	Domestic Activity (Number of Advertisements)	Leisure Activity (Number of Advertisements)	Paid Labour (Number of Advertisements)
Men	2	20	32
Women	9	5	16

Unlike the Japanese sample, however, the Australian sample shows men outnumbering women in representations of both contemporary culture/society (by a ratio of 3:1) *and* ‘traditional’ culture/society (by a ratio of 12:1) (Figure 4.6). In contemporary settings, Australian men are shown in roles such as Rotarians, cricket stars, and surf iron-men, and in ‘traditional’ settings they frequently wear Akubras and work as farmers and stockmen. This notable dearth of women in images of both ‘traditional’ and contemporary Australian culture is consistent with the historical underrepresentation of women in authorised national discourses until recent decades.

**Figure 4.6 Australianness by Gender and Setting**

	Contemporary Culture/Society (Number of Advertisements)	‘Traditional’ Culture/Society (Number of Advertisements)
Men	18	12
Women	6	1

To recapitulate the patterns of representation in the Australian sample, women are represented in ways that emphasise their domestic roles and elide their contributions to the public realm. In addition, they are less visible than men both in contemporary settings

and in 'traditional' settings. Such representations both reflect and reinforce a pattern of male dominance in Australian society.

In sum, men are more likely to be carriers of national identity in Australian advertisements, while women are more likely to be the carriers of national identity in Japanese advertisements. Furthermore, men dominate in representations of Australian leisure activities, the most common convention for conveying Australianness, while women, through their domestic activities, dominate in representations of Japanese social relations, the most common convention for representing Japaneseness. In other words, the national identities constructed in the television advertisements of Australia and Japan are clearly *gendered* national identities. However, it would be overly simplistic to suggest that Australian national identity is 'masculine' while Japanese national identity is 'feminine.' This false dichotomy masks an important similarity between Australian and Japanese discourses of national identity: both reflect and reinforce a long-standing gender order in which women are constructed as largely domestic and passive, while men are constructed as largely public and active. However, while Japanese representations of gendered national identity generally confirm some feminist theorists' arguments that women are strongly associated with the past and with national 'traditions,' Australian representations do not conform to this pattern.

The analysis of general representational patterns here should not be understood to deny the great diversity of images present in the advertisements. In both Australian and Japanese samples a small number of advertisements presented gender role 'reversals,' in which women were engaged in paid labour or leisure while their male partners engaged in domestic tasks. Such representations may reflect and potentially contribute to changing gender roles in these two settings; however, they may also reveal tensions over, and resistance to, such changes.

### *Ethnicised discourses of national identity*

Content analysis of Australian and Japanese television advertisements reveals that mass mediated discourses of national identity in these two contexts are not only gendered but

also ethnicised. As noted in previous chapters, the notion of ‘white’ proprietorship in Australia and the notion of monoracialism in Japan have been central to discourses of national identity in these two settings. Therefore, it is not surprising that of Australian television advertisements with at least one adult character (n=250), the vast majority (81 percent) of advertisements had only ‘white’ characters; and of Japanese television advertisements with at least one adult character (n=466), the vast majority (83 percent) of advertisements featured only ‘Japanese’ characters.

I place the terms ‘white’ and ‘Japanese’ in quotation marks to highlight that these are character types or roles. I make no conclusions about the actual ethnic background of the actors, only about the apparent ethnicity of the characters they play. Furthermore, I make no claims about how closely television advertisements mirror the ethnic composition of the national populations of Australia and Japan. Because the categories of ‘white’ in Australia and ‘Japanese’ in Japan are fluid and relative, it is impossible to indicate what percentages of the respective national populations belong to these groups. In Chapter Three, I explained that in Australia, ‘white’ is a fluid and relative category. ‘White’ is not an either-or category; one person may be considered ‘more white’ than another, just as one person may be considered ‘more Australian’ than another, depending not only on their appearance, but their religion, the kind of language they speak, their style of dress, or the sports they play. Likewise, ‘Japanese’ is a shifting category which includes, depending on the context, all Japanese citizens, non-citizens who are the descendants of expatriate Japanese (so-called *nisei* and *sansei*), citizens or non-citizens who have only one Japanese parent (so-called *haafu*), and/or some ethnic minorities in Japan. For the purposes of this content analysis, if the ethnic ‘roles’ of the characters were not discernible (through such cues as physical features, clothing, and language use), the advertisement was excluded from analysis.

The percentage of advertisements with only ‘white’ or ‘Japanese’ characters is even higher when the sample of advertisements is narrowed to those with images of national identity. Of advertisements with representations of Australianness (n=114), 84

percent featured only 'white' characters, while of advertisements with representations of Japaneseness (n=185), 94 percent featured only 'Japanese' characters.

Furthermore, in the majority of advertisements featuring ethnic Others,<sup>84</sup> these characters generally do not participate in the everyday settings, activities or social relations most frequently associated with representations of Australianness and Japaneseness. For example, relatively few Australian advertisements with ethnic Other characters showed these characters engaged in everyday work, domestic or leisure settings; only 17 percent of these advertisements cast ethnic Others as 'ordinary' Australians, for example, as bankers, family members or holiday-makers. Instead, the majority of ethnic Others in the advertisements served primarily as objects of spectacle, for example as entertainers such as singers, dancers and actors (27 percent), or as professional athletes (21 percent). A further 15 percent of advertisements featuring ethnic Other characters cast them as relatively low-status service personnel, including cooks and hotel staff. Moreover, another eight percent of these advertisements showed ethnic Others, usually in Third World nations, as recipients of Australian charitable assistance.

The representation of ethnic Others in the television advertisements of Japan is remarkably similar to the representation of ethnic Others in Australian advertisements (Figure 4.7). Few Japanese advertisements featuring ethnic Others showed them in everyday work, domestic or leisure settings in Japan. For example, in only 18 percent of advertisements with ethnic Others were these Others cast as friends, neighbours, family members, coworkers or teachers in Japanese social settings. Instead, 24 percent of Japanese advertisements with ethnic Others featured foreign celebrities and entertainers. A further 10 percent of these advertisements featured foreign professional athletes, most of whom play on Japanese professional baseball and soccer teams; and another nine percent of these advertisements showed ethnic Others producing goods or providing services for Japanese consumption. Of the remaining advertisements with ethnic Others,

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<sup>84</sup> In the Australian advertisements, most 'ethnic Others' are 'Asian' or 'aboriginal' characters. In the Japanese advertisements, most 'ethnic Others' are 'white;' however, 'black,' 'South American' and non-Japanese 'Asian' characters also appear in some advertisements.

another 24 percent feature only foreigners in foreign settings, such as a group of ‘whites’ dining at a Parisian restaurant, or a ‘white’ British couple driving through the English countryside, images apparently designed to give the advertised products an air of exoticism.

**Figure 4.7 Representations of Ethnic Others in Australian and Japanese Advertisements**

	Everyday work, domestic or leisure settings	Celebrities or entertainers	Professional athletes	Low-status providers of goods and services	Ethnic Others in foreign settings	Recipients of charity	Other	Total
Australian advertisements with ethnic Others (n=48)	17%	27%	21%	15%	2%	8%	10%	100%
Japanese advertisements with ethnic Others (n=79)	18%	24%	10%	9%	24%	--	15%	100%

*Content analysis: conclusions and caveats*

The above content analysis suggests that advertised images of Australianness and Japaneseness mirror social hierarchies in which women and ethnic Others are subordinated, marginalised, and often rendered invisible. The data above suggest that male characters dominate in representations of Australianness, and even though women are numerically more prominent in representations of Japaneseness, they are, nonetheless, portrayed in largely subordinate social positions. Furthermore, as might be expected, the data suggest that representations of national identity in Australian and Japanese television



advertisements are ethnicised in relatively straight-forward ways, with ethnic minorities conspicuously marginalised in representations of the national imagined community.

The content analysis of advertisements provides valuable insights into mass mediated discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan; it provides, in other words, insights into discourse as *product*. However, for an understanding of discourse as *process*, it is necessary to examine the interplay of text and audience.

### Audience Responses

As I have stressed from the beginning, discourses of national identity are not simply narratives imposed on the masses by an economic, political or intellectual elite; discourses of national identity are negotiated and dynamic. Audiences actively interpret and critique mass mediated narratives of nation. In the last part of this chapter, I will examine Australian and Japanese responses to these mass mediated discourses of national identity.

In order to gauge audience responses to discourses of national identity in television advertisements, and in order to start participants thinking about issues of national identity, I screened a selection of advertisements in Australian and Japanese focus groups and asked participants to rate the advertisements on how ‘Australian’ or ‘Japanese’ they were. Focus groups ranged from three to eleven participants of the same occupational status and age bracket.<sup>85</sup> Participants watched thirteen advertisements from their own countries. I selected the advertisements for the gender and ethnicity of the principal characters, and for the advertisement ‘type’ (Figure 4.8). I selected advertisements of these ‘types’ because my content analysis suggested that these contained key conventions in the representation of national identity.

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<sup>85</sup> See Chapter Two for parameters of the sample.

**Figure 4.8 Definitions of Advertisement ‘Types’ Screened in Focus Groups<sup>86</sup>**

<b>Advertisement Type</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Nostalgic-serious:	Advertisements with predominantly ‘traditional’ and sentimental imagery, used to evoke the cherished ways of life in days gone by.
Nostalgic-humorous:	Advertisements with ‘traditional’ or historical images used for humorous effect.
Humorous mixture of old and new:	Advertisements which combine ‘traditional’ and contemporary images for humorous effect.
Changing social roles:	Advertisements in which characters step outside the customary social roles for individuals of their gender, age, ethnicity, or occupational status.
Contemporary leisure:	Advertisements in which characters are engaged in contemporary leisure pursuits.
Multiculturalism and internationalisation:	Advertisements which feature ethnic Others and/or evoke the contemporary ethics of Australian multiculturalism or Japanese internationalisation.
Neutral:	Advertisements which do not contain any discernible images of Australianness or Japaneseness.

Participants rated the advertisements on a Likert scale of 1 (‘Not at all Australian/Japanese’) to 5 (‘Very Australian/Japanese’). Calculating the means of the scores reveals that in both the Australian and Japanese samples, advertisements with nostalgic images were perceived by participants to be the most Australian or Japanese (Figure 4.9).<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> For a detailed description of the advertisements screened in focus groups, see Appendix Three.

<sup>87</sup> I make no claims regarding the statistical significance of the differences between the scores. Rather, I present them here as a rough ranking of the ‘Australianness’ and ‘Japaneseness’ of the advertisements as perceived by participants.

**Figure 4.9 Audience Response Survey:  
Mean 'Australianness' and 'Japaneseness' of Advertisements**

Rank	Advertisement Type with Gender and Ethnicity of Main Characters	'Australianness' Mean Score	Advertisement Type with Gender and Ethnicity of Main Characters	'Japaneseness' Mean Score
1	Nostalgic-serious: Male, Female, 'White'	4.58	Nostalgic-serious: Male, 'Japanese'	4.63
2	Nostalgic-serious: Male, 'White'	4.50	Nostalgic-humorous: Male, 'Japanese'	4.32
3	Nostalgic-humorous: Male, 'White'	4.43	Humorous mix of old and new: Male, 'Japanese'	4.26
4	Contemporary leisure: Male, 'White'	4.09	Nostalgic-serious: Female, 'Japanese'	4.23
5	Humorous mixture of old and new: Male, Female, 'White,' 'Indian'	3.64	Nostalgic-humorous: Female, 'Japanese'	3.95
6	Contemporary leisure: Male, 'White'	3.36	Contemporary leisure: Female, 'Japanese'	3.75
7	Nostalgic-serious: Female, 'White'	3.33	Humorous mix of old and new: Female, 'Japanese'	3.74
8	Nostalgic-humorous: Female, 'White'	3.32	Neutral: Male, Female, 'Japanese'	3.38
9	Changing social roles: Male, Female, 'White'	2.91	Changing social roles: Male, Female, 'Japanese'	3.21
10	Multiculturalism: Male, Female, 'Asian'	2.62	Changing social roles: Male, Female, 'Japanese'	3.16
11	Neutral: Male, Female, 'White,' 'Asian'	2.55	Internationalisation: Female, 'Japanese,' 'White'	3.04
12	Contemporary leisure: Female, 'White'	2.07	Contemporary leisure: Male, 'Japanese'	3.00
13	Multiculturalism: Female, 'Thai'	1.55	Internationalisation: Male, 'Japanese,' 'White'	2.15

In the Australian survey results, the three advertisements with the highest mean scores for 'Australianness' all consist of predominantly nostalgic images. However, those nostalgic advertisements with *some*, or *all*, male characters were considered more 'Australian' than those nostalgic advertisements with *only* female characters. This is part of a wider trend, in which most advertisements with only female characters are perceived to be less Australian than those advertisements with some or all male characters. The only exceptions to this trend are advertisements in which a male character is present but is engaged in non-gender-stereotypical behaviour (in this case, planning and cooking the evening meal for his female partner), or when ethnic minority characters are also present in an advertisement with a 'white' male. These cases suggest that 'reversed' gender roles and 'non-white' ethnicity diminish the Australianness established by the 'white' male presence. Representations of leisure in the advertisements provide a telling example. As noted in the first part of this chapter, images of leisure practices are key to mass mediated discourses of Australian national identity. However, while advertisements featuring male characters engaged in leisure pursuits were abundant in the total advertisement sample, and were given relatively high marks for their 'Australianness,' advertisements featuring female characters engaged in leisure were very scarce in the sample, and the advertisement shown to focus groups was rated second to the lowest for its 'Australianness.'

In terms of ethnicity, the four advertisements considered most Australian (those advertisements which received a mean score of 4.0 or above), were peopled by only 'white' characters, while three out of the four advertisements considered least Australian contained ethnic Other characters. Considering the results of the content analysis, it is not surprising that advertisements featuring ethnic Others were perceived to be less Australian than those featuring only 'whites.' However, one advertisement featuring ethnic Others ranked in the top five most Australian advertisements, with a mean score of 3.64. It is worthwhile analysing this advertisement in greater detail.

In this advertisement for lamb, a 'white' Australian father presides over the Sunday roast lamb meal, an event constructed as Australian 'tradition.' At the head of the

table, he anticipates with pleasure the meal to come; however, when his wife sets out the main dish and announces that it is 'tandoori lamb,' he feigns displeasure at such exotic fare. Then, with a chime of sitar music, the camera pans back to reveal his grown 'white' daughter, her 'Indian' husband and their children. The whole family laughs, and the slogan reads, 'Lamb. The Multicultural Meal.' The advertisement both marks the 'Indian' man and the 'mixed' children as ethnic Others, but admits them into the Australian family and its cherished Sunday ritual. In other words, in the spirit of Australian multiculturalism, the advertisement both acknowledges ethnic difference and embraces it. This display of the multicultural ethic in a 'white' domestic setting may account for the relatively high mean score of the ad. Of the other three advertisements featuring ethnic Others, the advertisement ranked tenth portrayed interactions between 'Asians' in an 'Asian' restaurant; the advertisement ranked eleventh portrayed an 'Asian' man playing golf, seemingly alone; and the advertisement rated least Australian featured a 'Thai' mother and daughter speaking Thai in a Thai household. These three advertisements mark the characters as ethnic Others, without clearly evoking an ethic of multicultural inclusivity.

The Japanese survey results show that advertisements with nostalgic images consistently rate high on 'Japaneseness.' In a trend similar to the Australian results, nostalgic advertisements with male principal characters were considered more Japanese than those with female characters. At first glance, this seems to contradict findings from the content analysis which suggested that 'Japaneseness' in the advertisements was most commonly embodied by female characters. However, from at least one point of view these conclusions remain valid in light of audience responses. For although viewers considered the nostalgic advertisements with male characters more 'Japanese' than the nostalgic advertisements with female characters, the fact remains that in the sample of advertisements examined, the vast majority of nostalgic advertisements featured female characters. Thus, when audience survey results suggest that nostalgic images are most strongly associated with 'Japaneseness' and content analysis demonstrates that the majority of nostalgic images are associated with female characters, it is still reasonable to

conclude that in the advertisements of Japan, 'Japaneseness' is most often embodied by female characters.

In terms of ethnicity, as noted earlier in the chapter, relatively few advertisements featured ethnic Others; and of the advertisements shown to focus groups, the two featuring ethnic Others ranked eleventh and last in terms of their perceived 'Japaneseness.' Interestingly, the principal characters of the advertisement rated least Japanese were, in fact, Japanese. The advertisement featured two Japanese teenaged boys dressed in American inner-city fashion, 'rapping' about the soft drink Sprite. However, the young men sang in Kansai dialect, which differs substantially from the Japanese spoken in Hokkaido. This combination of dialect, clothing style and music style perhaps accounts for the intriguing fact that many Japanese viewers believed that these young men were singing in English. Furthermore, this may explain the perception that this was the least Japanese advertisement in the sample shown to focus groups.

Perceptions of the 'Australianness' and 'Japaneseness' of the advertisements varied little with the age, sex and occupation of the participants. Figure 4.10 illustrates the similarity of perceptions of 'Australianness' and 'Japaneseness' for top-ranked and bottom-ranked advertisements among participants of different ages, sexes and occupations. These similarities are consistent across all the advertisements in the sample. In the semi-structured discussion which followed the screening of the advertisements, however, some differences do emerge, differences which are discussed in detail in Chapters Five and Six.

**Figure 4.10 Audience Response Survey: Mean ‘Australianness’ and ‘Japaneseness’ of Advertisements by Age, Sex and Occupation of Participants**

	Least ‘Australian’ Advertisement	Most ‘Australian’ Advertisement	Least ‘Japanese’ Advertisement	Most ‘Japanese’ Advertisement
<b>All participants</b>	1.55	4.57	2.14	4.63
<b>14-55 years</b>	1.39	4.47	2.13	4.63
<b>55+ years</b>	2.15	4.78	2.18	4.61
<b>Female</b>	1.83	4.57	2.27	4.68
<b>Male</b>	1.20	4.60	2.07	4.60
<b>Student</b>	1.55	4.55	2.12	4.88
<b>Teacher<sup>88</sup></b>	----	----	2.00	4.54
<b>Public Servant</b>	1.22	4.56	1.90	4.75
<b>Private Sector Employee</b>	1.20	4.40	2.56	4.66
<b>Business Owner</b>	1.00	4.63	2.09	4.45
<b>Farmer</b>	1.65	4.59	2.26	4.42
<b>Retiree</b>	1.58	4.70	2.33	4.66

*Contexts of mass mediated discourses of national identity and audience responses*

A discussion of audience responses to any sample of advertisements would be incomplete without a consideration of the contexts of the production and reception of these texts.

Although advertisements are a rich source of narratives of nation, the central purpose of advertisements is not to discursively construct the nation, but to encourage an audience to

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<sup>88</sup> Data for Australian teachers are unavailable because, due to scheduling complications, I conducted in-depth interviews rather than focus groups with Australian teachers.

buy particular products. Advertisements are not free-floating cultural texts; they are anchored in the economics of consumption.

In terms of this thesis, the nature of the products and services advertised undoubtedly shaped participants' perceptions of the 'Australianness' or 'Japaneseness' of the advertisements. It is likely that certain products were viewed as more 'Australian' or more 'Japanese' because of their perceived links with the national culture. However, it is not possible to determine the degree to which participants evaluated the advertisements based on the *product itself* or based on the *presentation of the product* through words and images. Figure 4.11 details the products or services promoted in the advertisements shown to Australian and Japanese focus groups. Advertisements are listed in rank order, from those participants judged most 'Australian'/'Japanese' to those judged least 'Australian'/'Japanese.'



**Figure 4.11 Product or Service Advertised in Order of the Perceived ‘Australianness’ or ‘Japaneseness’ of the Advertisement**

‘Australianness’ Rank	Product or Service Advertised	‘Japaneseness’ Rank	Product or Service Advertised
1	Paint	1	Knives
2	Cricket video	2	Instant noodles
3	Water tanks	3	Canned tea
4	Beer	4	Travel agency
5	Lamb	5	Liquid antacid
6	Breakfast cereal	6	Hotel
7	Books	7	Vegetable oil
8	Soft drink	8	Antacid tablets
9	Gravy mix	9	Chewing gum
10	Bank	10	Toilet cleaner
11	Car company	11	Sweet bean jam
12	Shampoo	12	Beer
13	Thai curry sauce	13	Soft drink

In four of out of five of the advertisements rated most ‘Australian,’ the advertised products themselves are strongly associated with widely circulating discourses of national identity. While cricket and beer evoke (masculine) Australian leisure practices, water tanks and lamb evoke Australia’s rural agricultural heritage. Among the top-ranked advertisements, only the first, an advertisement for paint, did not advertise a distinctly Australian product or service. Its high perceived Australianness is explained by the presentation of the product, rather than the product itself. The advertisers used images of a rural (and largely ‘white’ male) Australia and a voice-over narrative in the style of a Banjo Patterson poem to construct the product as Australian. By linking their product to such discourses of national identity, the advertisers equate the product with the

dependability and ruggedness of Australian archetypes such as the Man from Snowy River. In fact, participants in most social locations explicitly discussed the way the advertisement evoked Banjo Paterson and/or the heroic characters he created.

At the other end of the spectrum, three of the four advertisements ranked least Australian advertised products perceived by participants to be 'foreign.' In the case of the lowest-ranked advertisement, for 'Thai curry sauce,' audience perceptions were likely shaped by the presentation of the product itself as an 'authentically' foreign product. In response to the other low-ranking advertisements, participants suggested that these were not 'Australian' because the products were manufactured by foreign companies such as Ford and Procter and Gamble.<sup>89</sup> Of the lowest-ranked one third of advertisements, only the advertisement ranked tenth advertised a product or service marked in some way as 'Australian,' an advertisement for the National Australia Bank. Although participants commented on the Australianness of the institution itself, and on the values of hard work and family life portrayed in the advertisement, they gave the advertisement a low Australianness score overall. This low score is best explained by the ethnicity of the characters featured in the advertisement, an 'Asian' Australian family speaking their native language in the kitchen of their 'Asian' restaurant. In the case of this advertisement, it appears that the perceived Australianness of the advertised product and the social ethics conveyed in the advertisement, are diminished by the 'non-white' ethnicity of the characters. The presence of 'Asians' disrupts the ideology of 'white' proprietorship of the nation.

In the Japanese audience response surveys, the three advertisements rated most Japanese advertised products closely linked with Japan's material culture: hand-crafted knives, which participants associated with Japan's world-renowned swords; noodles, which feature prominently in the nation's cuisine; and tea, especially the green tea advertised, which many participants identified as uniquely Japanese. The other advertisement ranked in the top third in terms of Japaneseness advertised a travel agency,

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<sup>89</sup> I make no assertions about the actual ownership of these corporations. However, the comments of many participants suggested a widespread perception that these are foreign-owned corporations.

not a distinctly Japanese product. Rather, the high score given to this advertisement is explained by the way the company was presented through ‘traditional’ symbols of Japaneseness, such as cherry blossoms, a paper fan (*uchiwa*) and cotton *kimono* (*yukata*).

The connection between products and the perceived Japaneseness of the advertisements is less obvious in the bottom third of the ranking. I have already discussed the perceived foreignness of the characters in the lowest-ranked ad. It is likely that the perceived foreignness of the product itself, the soft drink Sprite, shaped participants’ perceptions of the advertisement. Unlike Sprite, the toilet cleaner advertised in the tenth-ranked advertisement, is not an obviously foreign product. For instance, while the name ‘Sprite’ is written on the product and in the advertisement in Roman letters, the name of the toilet cleaner is written in Japanese script. Furthermore, participants commented that the characters in the advertisement were ‘typical’ Japanese in many ways. The low perceived Japaneseness of the advertisement is best explained, then, by its portrayal of non-gender-stereotypical behaviour, a man cleaning the household toilet. Such an image disrupts notions of ‘traditional’ Japanese patriarchy, which participants in most social locations identified as a strong organisational principle of Japanese society.

Advertisements for sweet bean jam (*an*) and Sapporo brand beer also scored low on Japaneseness. Since sweet bean jam is a distinctly Japanese confection, and Sapporo Beer is not only a Japanese product, but a product associated with Hokkaido,<sup>90</sup> the low perceived Japaneseness of these advertisements is best explained by the presentation of these products. For instance, the advertisement for sweet bean jam featured a ‘white’ English teacher whose presence challenged the notion of an ethnically homogeneous nation. Despite the perceived Japaneseness of the product, the presence of a ‘foreigner’ rendered the advertisement less Japanese in the eyes of participants. In fact, some participants commented that the ‘traditional’ image of the product and the image of the ‘white’ foreigner ‘clashed.’

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<sup>90</sup> The city of Sapporo is the prefectural capital of Hokkaido.

The case of the Sapporo Beer advertisement is more complex. The advertisement featured an intense ‘Japanese’ man practising golf while a smiling ‘Japanese’ woman watched. A content analysis of the advertisement reveals strong appeals to national identity based on leisure practices, long-standing gender roles, and the name of the product itself, a Japanese place name. In fact, focus group participants frequently singled out the male character as a ‘typical Japanese man.’ An explanation for the low perceived Japaneseness of the advertisement lies in the tensions between everyday experiences of Japanese participants and widely circulating discourses of national identity. That is, although many participants asserted that the advertisement was a realistic portrayal of (male) Japanese life and the (male) Japanese character, they associated Japaneseness more with the ‘traditional’ symbols of the nation, such as cherry blossoms or *kimono*, portrayed in the top-ranked advertisements.

The above discussion highlights the complex material and discursive practices which shape perceptions of advertisements. The primary aim of advertisements is to sell products, and advertisers frequently employ images of national ‘tradition,’ history or pride in order to increase the appeal of their products. However, the discourses of national identity generated in such advertisements are read in diverse ways by audiences, who sometimes accept, sometimes reject, and sometimes read against the grain of such constructions.

### Summary and Conclusions

To recapitulate the findings of this chapter, I have argued that national identities are constituted, in part, through mass mediated discourses of nation, and that in Australia and Japan these discourses are profoundly gendered and ethnicised in the following ways. My content analysis of television advertisements reveals that in these mass mediated discourses of national identity, representations of ‘Australianness’ are primarily embodied by ‘white’ male characters, while representations of ‘Japaneseness’ are primarily embodied by ethnically ‘Japanese’ women. In both samples, women are constructed as

passive and domestic, and are underrepresented in portrayals of contemporary public life; and ethnic minorities are constructed as essentialised, exotic and/or inferior Others, or simply rendered invisible. Such representations are inscribed with and reinscribe both patriarchal ideology and the ideologies of 'white' proprietorship in Australia and ethnic 'Japanese' proprietorship in Japan. However, a small number of advertisements presented challenges to these ideologies by portraying gender role reversals or the inclusion of ethnic others in the national imagined community.

While audience responses to a selection of advertisements generally reconfirm the conclusions of my content analysis, they also suggest that audiences read these representations in complex ways. For instance, while content analysis demonstrates that representations of Australian national identity are overwhelmingly 'white,' audience responses reveal that ethnic minorities may be perceived as Australian if they are shown in distinctly 'white' Australian social settings, such as the family Sunday dinner. Furthermore, while content analysis demonstrates that representations of Japanese national identity are dominated by ethnically 'Japanese' characters, audience responses reveal that even Japanese-speaking 'Japanese' characters may be perceived as foreign (*gaikokuteki*) if they fail to conform to linguistic and other behavioural norms. Furthermore, while content analysis indicates that Japaneseness is more often embodied by women than men, the audience response research shows complex perceptions of such gendered discourses. That is, while 'nostalgic' advertisements with male characters were rated more 'Japanese' than 'nostalgic' advertisements with female characters, men less often appear in these 'nostalgic' representations; rather, it is women who generally embody this 'traditional' Japaneseness.

The audience response surveys also yielded some unexpected results. Contrary to my expectations, among Australian and Japanese participants respectively, responses to the advertisements were relatively homogeneous. Also contrary to my expectations, the advertisements I included as 'controls,' those which I thought contained no images of 'Australianness' or 'Japaneseness' received higher scores than expected, particularly in the Japanese sample, where the 'neutral' advertisement for antacid tablets ranked number

eight out of thirteen. In discussions that followed the screening of the advertisements, a number of Japanese participants voiced the opinion that Japanese people regularly take antacid medications because the strong pressure to conform to social norms results in digestive problems. As one business woman explained, 'Japanese people cannot say what they really think; and that causes pain in their stomachs.' Before these comments were made in focus group discussions, I was unaware that certain health problems could be perceived as an outcome of Japanese social norms. This surprising revelation illustrates the importance of balancing content analysis with audience response research in the study of national identities: because national identities are collectively constructed, content analysis alone cannot reveal the complexities and the fluidity of such constructions.

In this chapter I have suggested that symbols of national identity are frequently employed to market both domestic and globalised product lines to consumers in Australia and Japan. Furthermore, advertised images of Australian multiculturalism and Japanese internationalisation both acknowledge globalising social changes and evoke national identity in these two settings. Audience responses to such representations reveal a recognition of overlapping between mass mediated and authorised discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan.

The content analysis and audience response research presented in this chapter raise further questions about the links between gendered and ethnicised national identities and globalisation in Australia in Japan. Because mass mediated texts provide only a snapshot of widely circulating discourses of national identity, it is essential to examine the complex ways Australians and Japanese embrace, reject and/or reinterpret such widely circulating discourses. In the next two chapters, therefore, I examine the dynamic construction of folk discourses of national identity in these two settings by analysing data from in-depth interviews and focus groups with Australian and Japanese participants. Furthermore, while the analysis of television advertisements hints at ambiguous and even contradictory constructions of Australian multiculturalism and Japanese internationalisation, what remains is to examine folk understandings of, and responses to, these phenomena, a task I undertake in Chapter Seven.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### FOLK DISCOURSES OF AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY

In Chapter Four I analysed the construction of gendered and ethnicised national identities in the television advertisements of Japan and Australia. While textual analyses and audience response surveys are valuable in that they provide one window onto the link between gender, ethnicity and national identity, more complex and more subtle understandings of national identity are found in folk discourses, face-to-face conversations in Australia and Japan. Therefore, in this chapter and the one which follows, I examine the discursive repertoires that Australian and Japanese participants use to talk about national identity. I argue in this chapter that for Australian participants, the ‘imagined community’ has concrete features; it is both gendered and ethnicised in the popular imagination in ways which reflect, reinforce and contest current social hierarchies.

#### Dimensions of National Identity

In the previous chapter I argued that in the television advertisements of Japan and Australia, representations of national identity centre around four basic themes: the environment, material and symbolic culture, social relationships and social ethics, and leisure practices. I began my analysis of the transcript data with these same coding categories; however, after an initial coding of the transcripts, I modified these categories to better reflect the recurring themes in participants’ articulations of national identity. *Social relations and social ethics, material and symbolic culture, and the environment*, still figured prominently in these discussions; however, leisure alone was not a prominent theme. Therefore, I modified my coding categories to incorporate *everyday practice*, which includes references not only to leisure practices, but also to paid or unpaid labour, and to long-standing ritual behaviours or customs, which participants suggested were common throughout the nation. While there is some overlap between ‘everyday practice’ as an analytical category and ‘material and symbolic culture,’ I employ these categories

because they best reflect the ways these topics were raised by participants. Another recurring theme in the transcript data, for which I did not code in my analysis of mass mediated discourses of national identity, was the *national character*, the supposed personality traits of the national populace, and the specific individuals or types of individuals (*archetypes*) thought to exemplify these shared traits. While the content of the national character was certainly implied in some of the mass mediated texts I analysed, it was only made explicit in folk constructions of national identity in Australia and Japan.

### Gendered and Ethnicised Dimensions of Australian National Identity

In the following section, I chart the broad contours of discourses of Australian national identity as discussed in focus groups and in-depth interviews. This analysis is undertaken with the dual aim of rendering explicit the gendered and ethnicised nature of such discourses, and examining the ways people *use* such discourses in the process of symbolically ordering their social worlds. I concentrate on the widely circulating discourses of national identity which emerge from Australian transcript data; however, it should be noted that such discourses are inherently unstable and fluid, and are routinely interpreted and contested by participants in a variety of ways. Therefore, I also explore the complex ways some participants challenge widely circulating discourses of national identity.

#### *National archetypes and the national character*

Nowhere is the gendered and ethnicised nature of the imagined community seen more clearly than in participants' descriptions of national archetypes, for such archetypes are inherently embodied. Perhaps most striking in the Australian transcript data is the sheer number and variety of masculine archetypes offered up by participants as exemplars of Australianness. These archetypes were drawn from arenas as diverse as labour, the fine arts, sport and leisure; from rural and urban settings and past and contemporary settings; and they ranged from figures of pride to figures of fun; from famous individuals to



personal acquaintances; and from specific men to generalised masculine stereotypes. Crocodile Dundee, Don Bradman, the swagman, the ANZAC, the larrikin, the 'man on the land,' and even the ocker, the yobbo and the bludger were recurring exemplars of Australianness in folk discourses of national identity.<sup>91</sup>

Feminine archetypes, on the other hand, were virtually absent from participants' discussions of Australian national identity, an absence which some participants acknowledged explicitly. In the following exchange, excerpted in the Introduction to this thesis, Roger, a school teacher, reflected on the masculinity of Australian archetypes.

Interviewer: What can you tell me about Australians? What are Australians like?

Roger: Well, it's a very hard thing to put a finger on, in a way . . . To an extent it is the stereotypical ideas that come out. And very often they seem to be sort of like the male stereotype Australian rather than anyone having sort of a stereotype of a female Australian. And so it is . . . ideas about the beer drinking and that sort of very gregarious type character, or the outback type image, or the sun-bronzed beach life-saver type of image.

Interviewer: Could you . . . is there such a thing as a stereotypical Australian woman?

Roger: I don't think so . . . I think a lot of our Australian sort of ideas of identity, whether they are just stereotypes or not, tend to be sort of male rather than gender-neutral or female specifically.

Likewise, Brenda, a small business owner, and Lisa and Paula, both school teachers, explicitly noted that the 'typical' Australian is a male Australian. However, all three women suggested that the national imagery *should* include women as well.

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<sup>91</sup> Although most readers will be familiar with Crocodile Dundee, the fictional frontiersman of the Australian outback, other national male archetypes may require further explanation. Don Bradman was a leading figure in Australian cricket; ockers and yobbos are coarse and simple 'rednecks,' usually opinionated and usually heavy drinkers; and bludgers are people (usually men) who choose to draw unemployment benefits rather than work for a living. The swagman, ANZACS and the larrikin were explained in Chapter Three. It should be noted that while Don Bradman featured in one of the advertisements shown to focus groups, which may account for frequent references to him in focus group discussions, other sportsmen not shown in the advertisements were also frequently cited as exemplars of Australianness.

Focus group discussions of one particular advertisement reveal that Australian participants, both men and women, young and old, typically constructed only essentialised discourses of womanhood in their accounts of national identity. The advertisement for a line of children's books features soft-focus close-up footage of a 'white' Australian mother teaching her two young children to read. I expected participants to perceive this familial scene as particularly Australian. Instead, a focus group of high school girls remarked that it 'wasn't anything;' male public servants suggested that it 'could have just as easily been overseas;' older male farmers noted it 'could have been England or anywhere;' and a female business owner remarked that it 'didn't do anything for me. . . . it was just family life.' Such comments reveal the taken-for-granted and naturalised character of women's domestic role. In other words, women *everywhere* are wives and mothers; wives and mothers are so universal they cannot be considered particularly 'Australian.' Curiously, however, male figures such as the sportsman, which are by no means unique to Australia, were still cited by participants as particularly Australian, suggesting that the masculine is privileged over the feminine in the framing of Australian national archetypes.

Discussions of the national character reveal a similar privileging of male over female in Australian discourses of national identity. However, while the national archetypes described above are usually explicitly gendered (Crocodile Dundee, for example, is unambiguously male), discussions of the national character are only implicitly gendered. It is therefore necessary to read against the grain to reveal this gendering. To provide a rough sketch of the national character as it emerged from Australian focus groups and interviews, participants noted that Australians are happy-go-lucky, relaxed, humorous, tough, outdoorsy, hard-working and self-deprecating.<sup>92</sup> Such characteristics correspond neatly to several of the male archetypes described above, the larrikin, the ANZAC, the sportsman, the 'man on the land.'

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<sup>92</sup> The extent to which any of these 'character' traits was stressed in participants' accounts of national identity was dependent upon the conversational context. Thus, Australians are described as 'relaxed' and 'easy-going' in one context, but 'hard-working' and 'tough' in another.

Furthermore, many of these character traits would seldom be used to describe women; nor would they be seen as appropriate character traits for a woman. Reading against the grain, the 'happy-go-lucky' or 'relaxed' woman is refigured as 'easy,' 'loose,' flighty or slatternly, failing to monitor her sexuality and her appearance to expected standards. If she raises her voice in would-be larrikinism, she is not 'humorous' but rather 'brash;' if she is 'tough' she is also 'hard,' lacking feminine sentimentality. On the other hand, while 'outdoorsy' is not necessarily used in a pejorative sense when it is applied to Australian women, participants strongly associated the 'outdoors' with male sport. Likewise, while women, as well as men, may be admired for their strong work ethic, in the Australian transcript data participants clearly saw 'the worker' as male, as I will discuss below. Of the key national character traits cited by participants, only self-deprecation, it would seem, is equally applicable to both men and women.

In the discussions between Australian participants, therefore, it would seem both the national character and national archetypes are either explicitly or implicitly gendered in the masculine. This may reflect the historical reality that from the beginning of European colonisation of Australia, the colonial population was disproportionately male, a pattern that continued until Federation. What is more, such discourses are also implicitly ethnicised. In discussions with Australian participants, the ethnicised imagined community is most clearly seen in the contrasts drawn between three groups: 'white' Australians (often referred to as 'average' or 'normal' Australians),<sup>93</sup> 'non-white' migrants (usually referred to as 'ethnics') and aboriginal Australians. While, as noted above, 'real' Australians were said to be relaxed, self-deprecating and hard-working, participants painted a very different picture of (usually 'non-white') migrants and aboriginal Australians.

Both female high school students and male farmers, for example, noted that in contrast to 'relaxed' Australians, migrants are 'stressed,' 'serious' and 'busy.' Sixteen

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<sup>93</sup> As in Chapter Four, I use the term 'white' rather than other common expressions such as 'Anglo-,' 'Anglo-Saxon,' or 'Anglo-Celtic.' I also adopt my participants' term, 'ethnics' instead of the more politically current 'non-English-speaking-background migrants.' The terms 'white' and 'ethnics' make explicit the issue of ethnicity, which is obscured by these other terms.

year-old Ann contrasted the slow-paced, authentically Australian rural lifestyle with the faster pace of Australian city life, a difference she attributed to the influence of migrants. 'In some places [in big Australian cities] people are really busy and stuff like that. It's probably because in some countries they were really busy, and then they . . . came over here, and made the rest of the people like that.' Likewise, a group of male farmers explicitly contrasted relaxed, self-deprecating 'Anglo-Saxon' Australians with serious, arrogant 'white' and 'non-white' migrants.

Jerry: Like we're pretty easy-going people. We don't take ourselves too seriously, which is good. But some people come in and they still *do* take themselves pretty seriously. Europeans tend to--

Robert: The Europeans tend to be pretty serious and full-on. The Dutch and--well, not so full-on, but they are pretty serious. And arrogant.

Jerry: And the Danes are pretty serious.

Robert: Yeah. And the Swedes.

Richard: Yeah, and the Danish and--

Jerry: And the Asians are like that too. We are about the only relaxed ones amongst them all.

Interviewer: So, when you say 'we,' who do you mean?

Jerry: Well, we would call ourselves, probably, the Anglo-Saxon descendants.

Similarly, female farmers contrasted the Australian work ethic, which 'ethnics' were said to share, with aboriginal Australian attitudes toward work.

Martha: The ethnics will get on because they have to. I mean that's the--almost the rule, I mean, for any migrant, if you go to a foreign country. That's why the aboriginals, they've not got that in them. They're here. They're at home. They haven't got that need to--

Anne: Well, their culture is so different, isn't it. It isn't geared to what we would call hard work.

- Martha: That's right.
- Anne: It's a totally different culture. Because they were nomads. And it's hard to hold down a business if you're a nomad.
- Dot: That's right. . . . They've got this in-ground nomadic thing in their blood. And they can't--often they can't settle down. And it's a great tragedy.

Such examples neatly reveal perceived differences between authentically 'Australian' behaviour and values and the behaviour and values of 'ethnics' and aboriginal Australians. Interview and focus group discussions also abounded with more subtle suggestions that 'white' Australians are the truest and the best Australians. Farmers, business owners, employees and high school students all implicitly made a distinction between 'ethnic' or aboriginal Australians and 'average,' 'normal' or 'ordinary' ('white') Australians. As Brian, an employee in his forties, remarked, 'If you have [ethnic] pockets like that, say, in Sydney, where you have got Vietnamese communities and probably the average Australian is too scared to go in there after dark, you know, that's not the Australian way of life.' 'Average' Australians here are clearly not Vietnamese-Australians, but, implicitly, 'white' Australians who fear becoming targets of violence if they enter the Asianised space of a predominantly Vietnamese suburb.

Participants' comments also reveal a sense of 'white' proprietorship. This assumed proprietorship surfaced in such commonplace turns of phrase as '*our* coloured people' and '*our* aboriginals' which appeared regularly throughout focus groups and interviews with Australian participants.

We've got our coloured people here, so what are we going to do with them? [Irene, a retiree];

[In New Zealand, the Maori people] cause a lot of trouble for everyone else. . . [They] sort of kick up like our aboriginals [Amanda, a farmer];

I find it really annoying that in ads they will have an American Negro . . . instead of using our aboriginal people [Rebecca, a business owner].

Such comments position 'white' Australians as governors of the national space, with both the right and the responsibility to rule the Others within.

Similarly, Martha, an older farmer, expressed concern over the loss of 'aboriginal culture:'

I just don't know what to think about the aboriginals . . . because they seem to be going down the scale instead of up the scale. . . . They're not refining their own culture. And I think we're partly to blame for it. We went to a display of aboriginal culture . . . like they had aboriginal drawings, and they were letting them do it, and weren't advising them to use their own ochres. They were using poster paints and all that kind of thing. . . . And that, to me, was very, very degrading for them.

Martha's comments construct indigenous Australians as a totalised, essentialised Other, an historical (or prehistoric) people frozen in time, and living outside of 'white' Australian time and space. She voiced concern about what she perceived to be the declining authenticity of aboriginal cultural practices, and suggested that 'we' ('white' Australians) must take some responsibility for this decline because we 'let' them use non-traditional materials. White Australians are positioned here with the power to judge, to advise, to allow aboriginal Australians to act in particular ways.

While the national archetypes described above are clearly gendered and ethnicised, many Australian participants critiqued the 'clichéd' nature of such discourses of national identity. When I asked Brenda, a small business owner, to describe a typical Australian, she remarked that the popular image of the 'man on the land' is inaccurate, both because it excludes women and because most Australians now live in the city. Interestingly, however, often, even after explicitly challenging the veracity of such national clichés, some participants still used such gendered and ethnicised discourses in the process of interpreting their social worlds. Although Brenda rejected gendered archetypes, she also offered her father as an exemplar of Australianness because, she explained, he is 'a bit of a Crocodile Dundee . . . the typical tough guy.' Brenda's comments reveal an intersection between abstract, widely circulating discourses of national identity and personal experiences of Australianness, for, while participants frequently reject popular clichés as overly simplistic, they nonetheless use such typologies in their accounts of the national imagined community and the individuals who constitute it. However, it was not possible to determine whether participants engage in similar

kinds of symbolic ordering in their everyday lives, or whether they used such orderings primarily as a way of presenting their experiences and perceptions to a foreign researcher investigating their national identity.

Participants' comments also frequently reveal a tension between abstract and experienced national identity. Lisa, a teacher, talked extensively about the sporting and drinking rituals of young Australian men, and the culture of male dominance that underpins such rituals. Throughout our interview, Lisa drew on the concept of male dominance to interpret significant events and circumstances in her social world: why her school had resisted hiring her; why female teachers earn, on average, less than male teachers; why women fail to get elected or reach positions of prominence in local politics (in which she would like to participate some day); why so many women in the local community are victims of domestic violence; and why so many young rural men, including some of her former students, die from suicide and alcohol-related accidents. I asked her whether she considered male dominance to be a part of Australian identity. She answered, 'I think it is part of what we might *imagine* is somewhat the Australian identity, but I don't think a lot of people are really like that. I mean a lot of people *I* know are not like that. A lot of my children's friends certainly aren't.' Lisa's comments reveal that both discourses of national identity and everyday experiences are contradictory and relative. Lisa has observed and experienced male dominance, and is aware of images of male dominance in discourses of Australianness; however, her comments suggest that there is too much diversity and complexity in Australian social relations to characterise them under such all-encompassing terms as 'male dominance.'

Rather than highlighting the tensions or intersections between clichéd and experienced Australianness, some participants' comments indicate a fit between the inherent ambivalence of national clichés, and their own uncertain location within the imagined national community. Dominic, a thirty-something council worker who migrated from southern Europe to Australia as a child, suggested that there is no such thing as an authentically Australian culture; rather there is just 'something that Australia has marketed as culture.' Noting current concerns about the so-called Asianisation or

Americanisation of Australian culture, he suggested, 'Maybe we are going through withdrawal symptoms of the myth that we created . . . [but] I just don't think we are going to lose something that we didn't have to start with.' Dominic perceived a grain of truth in the national clichés, however, and suggested that the 'essence' of Australianness can be found in rural communities among 'the cockies' [farmers].<sup>94</sup> Dominic's ambivalence about the clichés of national identity—they are both true and not true, genuine and fictitious—mirrors the ambivalence of his position as a migrant Australian. He explained, 'Like to me, I feel Australian and I feel [Greek], and I feel neither. Often people ask, like in [Greece] they ask when I go there, and people ask me here too, "What do you call yourself, Australian or [Greek]?" And it's like, fuck, you know. Both? Neither? I find borders really blurry.'<sup>95</sup>

In sum, then, in Australian focus group and interview data, national identity is strongly centred on 'white' male archetypes and characteristics. Participants construct discourses of ethnic proprietorship and masculine proprietorship, a kind of naturalised 'white' male supremacy. While many participants suggested that such widely circulating images of the gendered and ethnicised national community are clichés, they still used such images in their articulations of national identity. This should not be interpreted as evidence that widely circulating discourses of national identity are inescapable or unassailable; if they were, participants would be unlikely to challenge them at all. Rather, this suggests that participants contribute to multiple and competing discourses of national identity, some of which mirror participants' experiences, and some of which are in tension with their experiences. A return to what participants call the 'clichés' of national identity may also reveal something about the nature of fieldwork as an embodied process. That is, one possible explanation is that participants framed their own experiences and

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<sup>94</sup> The Australian usage of 'cockies' to mean 'farmers' originated during a period of heavy land settlement when white farmers were allowed to select and settle land previously leased from the Crown by graziers. Since the selectors often picked the best land, the graziers saw the selectors as being as destructive as a flock of cockatoos ('cockies') who would peck away the best of the crop.

<sup>95</sup> In order to protect Dominic's anonymity, I have changed his country of origin. However, he is of southern European descent.



perceptions in these national ‘clichés’ for my benefit. Because discourses of national identity are dialogic, the characteristics (and perceptions) of all participants shape those discourses. Just as my own perceptions of participants shaped the way I presented myself to them, it is likely that their perceptions of me as a foreign researcher shaped the ways they presented their views and experiences to me. Likewise, their perceptions of my research agenda, may have encouraged them to speak, in a sense, on behalf of all Australians, and thus to draw on broad generalisations, or what they identified as ‘clichés,’ in their constructions of national identity.

### *Social relations and social ethics*

A gendered and ethnicised imagined community likewise emerges out of participants’ discussions of Australian social relations and social ethics. One of the strongest themes to emerge is the principle of egalitarianism, and the related concepts of ‘a fair go,’ the work ethic, ‘mateship’ and tolerance.

Participants from all walks of life suggested that one of the key characteristics of Australian society is its egalitarianism. As Louise, a farmer who migrated from the United Kingdom, put it, in Australia ‘Everyone’s on the same level.’ However, participants’ accounts of this equality focused almost exclusively on class equality and a broadly conceived equality of opportunity, the so-called ‘fair go,’ while overlooking other kinds of inequality, such as that based on gender or ethnicity. The principle of ‘a fair go,’ the opportunity to achieve to the best of one’s abilities regardless of one’s social background, is mentioned consistently by participants as a core value of Australian society. As one female teacher noted,

Deep down most Australians have this attitude about a fair go. And their attitude is if people want to come and live here, fine, give them a fair go, see what they’re like, accept people on their own merits. And I honestly think most Australians don’t think too much about skin colour and things like that as long as the person is a good bloke, and easy to get on with and has something to offer and to contribute [Lisa].

What this excerpt reveals, however, is the implicit gendering of egalitarianism. Equality of opportunity is for the ‘good bloke’ whose easy-going manner and hard work

will win *him* acceptance among *his* (male) peers. In a popular expression of Australian egalitarianism, several participants observed that ‘Jack is as good as *his* master’ (emphasis added). Under the principle of egalitarianism, in other words, the male worker is equal to his (usually male) employer, and should therefore have equal opportunities to achieve. It is, in fact, the work ethic, another core Australian value noted by participants, that makes Jack as good as his master. Since most participants imagined the work force to be male, women were virtually absent from the discourse of egalitarianism and ‘a fair go.’

‘Non-white’ migrants, on the other hand, were seen by some participants as a threat to Australian egalitarianism. One female business owner, for instance, used the notion of ‘a fair go’ not only to demarcate the differences between (‘white’) ‘Australians’ and (‘non-white’) ‘ethnic people,’ but also to explain and tacitly support so-called ‘racist’ behaviour.

I think part of the Australian identity is a fair go, and I think with family and friends on the mainland, they are not given a fair go in relation to ethnic minorities that come over here. And I think that is what gets Australians’ goats. And that is why I feel a lot of them are racist, because they are not being given a fair go in comparison to these, to the ethnic people. Because they get given, like the Vietnamese are given this, that, and the other. And people that are in the same economic stratum, Australians, don’t get those same opportunities. . . . And *that* inflames racism, rather than the fact that their skin is a different colour [Georgia].

Such comments reveal that when ‘a fair go’ seems to be threatened by the perceived preferential treatment of (‘non-white’) migrants, what some consider racism, others consider a defence of purportedly core values of Australian society.

While the notions of egalitarianism, ‘a fair go’ and, to some extent, the work ethic are clearly gendered and ethnicised in Australian participants’ discussions, it is difficult to deconstruct another core value found consistently in the transcripts, ‘mateship.’ As noted in Chapter Three, Australian intellectuals including linguists, historians and feminists have argued that ‘mateship’ describes only bonds between (usually ‘white’) males. While many participants demonstrated an awareness of recent debates regarding the inclusion of

'mateship' in the proposed Constitutional Preamble, most asserted that 'mateship' refers to an ethos of togetherness and mutual aid, regardless of gender. A male business owner described 'mateship' as simply 'comradeship and helping out' [Conrad]; a female farmer suggested that 'mateship' refers to the fact that Australians 'like it better in a gang' [Dot]; and retired women and male and female employees suggested that 'mateship' means 'helping out' a friend, or even another nation, in need. As Paula, a teacher and granddaughter of southern European migrants, explained,

I don't think it [mateship] is an exclusively male thing. "Mate" is often used as a more male term, I gather, but "mateship" is between males and females. It's just an overall term describing our attitude to each other. . . . It's a term generally used in Australia, and it's from part of our heritage. And it's generally seen as something we value.'

The implicit masculinity of 'mate' is impossible to deny; the question, however, is whether the principle of mateship is one which excludes women from the national imagined community. Australian female participants clearly included themselves in narratives of 'helping out' neighbours and friends in times of trouble. One business woman, for example, recounted her own experiences of helping fellow business people after a flood. However, like other female participants, she did not explicitly suggest that her own actions constituted 'mateship.' Female participants only included themselves in the discourse of mateship implicitly, by defining 'mateship' as an ethos of mutual aid, and, at some point in the interview, recounting the ways they have helped others. That women implicitly include themselves in the discourse of mateship, however, does not mean that the term no longer carries masculinist and exclusionist connotations. It may, in fact, show that through their long familiarity with many such 'masculine generics,' women have become adept at reading themselves into the masculine collective.

Related to the notions of mateship and egalitarianism is the notion of 'tolerance' or 'acceptance' of others that participants most often associated with the Australian principle of multiculturalism. For some participants, this principle of acceptance seemed to be a personal and lived reality; for others, it seemed to exist only in the abstract, an accepted moral principle which nonetheless did not inform their everyday practice. These two different responses to the principle of acceptance are neatly captured by the narratives

of two participants: Dominic, a migrant from southern Europe, with a career in social work and community services; and Leanne, the Australian-born daughter of migrants from northern Europe, with career experiences in the military and in private business. Both participants were in their thirties.

For Dominic, the principle of multicultural acceptance appeared to be a part of his lived experience, a powerful part of his attachment to the nation, his sense of belonging to the national imagined community:

To me, it's part of the essence of this country. On a personal level, it is one of the things that really draws me to living in Australia. It's the difference in cultures, the fact that there are so many people from different countries living here quite harmoniously. You know, there are glitches here and there, but it is generally not too bad. And there is acceptance of that.

Leanne, on the other hand, appeared to accept multicultural tolerance in principle, while it did not inform her social action or attitudes. Leanne began our interview by telling me the reason she enjoys living in Tasmania is the absence of Asians. She recounted her experiences living in and around Sydney where street signs were written in Asian languages and Asian-Australians spoke their native languages in public places, a practice which offended her. She noted, however, that in her childhood home, she and her family preserved the language, diet and customs of her parents' native country. When I asked her whether it is possible to preserve one's ethnic heritage and still be a 'real Australian,' she answered matter-of-factly, 'Yes, definitely. Definitely. That's what being Australian is, isn't it? Being able to accept other people.' She later suggested that Asians constitute 'another species,' and she recalled with apparent pride an incident in which she grabbed a 'little Asian' man 'by the scruff of the collar' and shouted obscenities at him for not allowing an elderly 'white' woman to board a train ahead of him. 'They have respect for their own elders,' she explained, '[but] they had no respect for an elderly white person.'

In her account of the incident, Leanne evoked the ideology of 'white' proprietorship over the nation. First she described the man as 'little,' emphasising his

lack of power or significance in the imagined national community. She then attributed the actions of one particular man to the essentialised category of 'Asians,' who she suggested do not respect 'whites.' In other words, she constructed 'Asians' as both weak and in need of discipline, and she claimed for herself, as a 'white' the right and duty to monitor their behaviour and sanction them when she deems it necessary.

Other participants complicated the discourse of 'white' proprietorship by drawing parallels between the subordination of ('white') women and the subordination of ethnic minorities in Australia. Rose, a 'white' business owner, reflected on her own family life, and drew connections between gender, ethnicity, inequality and multicultural 'tolerance.'

Rose: I think women are more accepting of others. I am just thinking of the women in my family and the men, and I think the women are more accepting and less critical of other races.

Interviewer: Why do you think that is?

Rose: Because women can relate to being under authority, and in a lesser position in society. Being down-trodden. . . . So you can really see, you can understand, how women in different cultures would feel.

Rose's assumption that Other women are as 'down-trodden' and 'under authority' as ('white') Australian women suggests that she perceives patriarchy to be universal, even inevitable. Even more interesting is the way she exposes the power relations underpinning notions of multicultural 'tolerance.' She suggests that such 'tolerance' is largely the acceptance of one marginal group (migrants or 'other races') by another marginal group, women.

There is a tension here between the principle of egalitarianism (or 'acceptance' or multicultural tolerance) and the practice of patriarchy, a tension between a stated value of Australian society and its actual mode of social organisation. This tension between egalitarianism and patriarchy is a prominent feature of the Australian transcript data. Interestingly, most groups of participants suggested both that Australia is a land of equality for all, and that women in Australia face serious disadvantage relative to men. A

broad cross-section of participants noted that women earn less money than men for equal work; they are not promoted as readily; they shoulder the majority of housework and childcare duties; they are not taken seriously in politics; their sporting achievements are largely ignored; and they suffer physical abuse at the hands of the men in their lives.

While participants generally agreed on the effects of patriarchy, however, opinion was divided on the origins of Australian patriarchal social relations. Four possible explanations were offered by participants: that patriarchy is part of the nation's rural, convict and/or sporting heritage; that patriarchy is, in part, a backlash against the rapid economic and social changes of recent years; that Australian patriarchy is partly a result of ('non-white') migrants importing extreme forms of patriarchy into the nation; and that patriarchy primarily exists in women's minds, and it can therefore be overcome if women change the way they think. Some participants also suggested that patriarchy has grown out of some combination of these factors.

The historical or 'traditional' nature of Australian patriarchy was noted by both male and female participants, younger and older. While Paula, the teacher quoted earlier, suggested that male dominance in Australia has developed, in part, around the national 'religion' of football, Henry, an older farmer, suggested that it has developed out of the gender division of labour of Australian farming families, where it is necessary for men to work the land and women to take charge of housework and child care. Rather than mentioning specific historical circumstances, however, most participants, simply suggested that patriarchy is an historical inevitability in Australia. 'It comes from our past,' Paula observed. Likewise, bringing up female victims of domestic violence, Roger, also a teacher, noted, 'They just accept it. It's part of their way of life. [They think] "I'm female. It's part of my lot in life."'

Some participants, however, suggested that Australian patriarchy is either much more recent in origin, or that it is a long-standing practice that has intensified recently. Lisa, a female teacher who spoke at length about her own encounters with sexism and sex discrimination, explained the violent nature of patriarchy in her local community.

Well, there's a lot of violence down here in homes. A lot of homes are still very male dominated. . . . I think we're in a very rapid period of change at the moment, in schools, and in society and everything. And that's half the reason why some of these communities . . . why some of the old things might be even more exaggerated at the moment, because people are kind of clinging on, keeping the boundaries. I mean, men feel threatened down here, some of them. So they over-react. You know? And that is just one example I know that has happened, where some of the local men have felt very threatened by the fact that their wives might be making a few moves to do things slightly differently and that. And they over-react to pull them back into line. . . . Sometimes with violence.

Likewise, Roger, the male teacher who spoke explicitly about the masculine gendering of Australian archetypes, reflected on his own encounters with migrants to suggest that male dominance in Australia has only intensified over time, with the influx of migrants from even more strongly patriarchal societies. He recalled an incident in his university days when he became interested in dating a young woman from a ('non-white') migrant family. The two never went on a date, however, for when she accepted his invitation, she 'got into all sorts of trouble' with her parents, who wanted her to marry someone else. He concluded the following from his experience:

I guess historically we have tended to be a fairly patriarchal society, but I guess we brought European ideas with us, particularly English ideas in terms of sort of the man being the worker and so on, and the wife being at home. . . . But I guess on the other hand a lot of our societies, in fact, are more patriarchal. . . . A lot of ethnic groups that have come into Australia are more patriarchal than Australian society is. Therefore, if anything, they would have had a negative influence.

While Roger and Lisa sought explanations for patriarchy in contemporary Australian social circumstances, some female participants suggested that patriarchy is largely a state of mind. If women refused to accept a lower social position and the extra burdens that entails, they argued, gender equality would become a reality. Paula, for example, explained that despite her intellectual understanding of principles of gender equality, she unconsciously accepts patriarchal ideology.

Paula:           With regard to females in society, yes we have changed. I still think we have a little way to go.

Interviewer: What do you mean?

Paula: Well, with regard to getting equality, yes, and not being discriminated against. People just don't think that's a problem any more. And we just take it for granted that we do have equal rights. But statistics don't really indicate that. And it's still quite hard sometimes to break the mould. Even personally, you know, you sometimes feel the house looks-- "Oh, I better have the kitchen looking clean, because someone will think I'm not very good. If visitors come, they'll think I'm terrible in the house." And it's not just my responsibility, it's my partner's responsibility as well. But you do tend to take it all on yourself. Even though your brain tells you you shouldn't have to, something, something, probably history or socially something, tells you it's your responsibility.

While the above discussion of social relations and social ethics reveals the complex ways gender and ethnicity crosscut participants' discourses of egalitarianism, a fair go, mateship, the work ethic, multicultural tolerance and patriarchy, the effects of such discourses are worth stressing. Discourses of egalitarianism (including notions of a fair go, mateship and tolerance), have dual effects. First, they naturalise the dominance of privileged groups. That is, if disadvantaged groups face hardships due to their own failure to compete on an even playing field, and those in power have earned their positions of privilege, current social hierarchies are justified. Secondly, such discourses of egalitarianism suggest that even marginalised groups can attain not only equality but positions of privilege if they work hard enough. This promise of future rewards legitimates current power relations by encouraging compliance with the current system of expected performance, recognition and advancement.

The effects of these discourses are not merely theoretical speculation. Participants' own words suggest that discourses of egalitarianism are used to legitimate certain forms of inequality. When I asked Roger, the teacher quoted several times above, whether there are certain core values that Australians share, he responded, 'The mateship, the fair go type attitude, that everyone sort of deserves a chance to have a job, or those sorts of ideas. And, well, fair enough, if they blow it, and they are an idiot and they don't take chances and so on, then they deserve what they get, so to speak.' Just as Roger used



the ideal of egalitarianism to justify why certain people ‘deserve what they get,’ Paula’s explanation of patriarchy, above, naturalised her own oppression as a woman. She noted that women ‘have a little way to go’ but she suggested that something inside their heads is holding them back. In the logic of Paula’s argument, women are responsible for their own oppression, for patriarchy is located in a woman’s state of mind; only by changing the way she thinks will she achieve equality.

At the same time, the fact that participants identify patriarchal social relations as problematic constitutes a challenge to masculinist discourses of national identity. Interestingly, the most vocal critics of patriarchy were the public school teachers I interviewed. This is significant in that, as employees of the state, they could be expected to echo state concerns to some extent. Their comparatively high awareness of, and critiques of, patriarchy are consistent with state policies designed to increase gender equity in education.

### *Everyday practice*

In discussions of Australian national identity, participants talk not only about the more abstract dimensions of national identity, such as the national character or social relations and social ethics, but also about concrete everyday practices, such as work and leisure practices. Like the dimensions of national identity discussed above, discourses of everyday practice are also strongly gendered and ethnicised.

I have already discussed the centrality of the work ethic in participants’ perceptions of the character and core values of Australians. What emerges clearly from participants’ narratives about everyday Australian practice is that the ‘typical’ Australian is perceived to be a ‘worker,’ and the worker is perceived by most participants to be a man. When asked to describe an ‘average’ or ‘typical’ Australian, participants in a wide variety of social locations talked about ‘the working man,’ the ‘man who works the land,’ the ‘man who works with his hands,’ the ‘old bloke working alone,’ the ‘self employed man,’ the ‘guy in a workshop,’ the ‘bloke going off to work every morning to support his family,’ or any number of variations on such masculine symbolic types.

Many female participants did not passively accept their discursive exclusion from the imagined working community of Australia, however. Female farmers, in particular, were vocal about the contributions women make to Australia's labour force and communal life. Louise, an older migrant farmer from the U.K., praised rural Australian women for the active part they play on their farms and in their communities. She suggested that, compared to British women, Australian women have had to endure harsher environmental and social conditions, and this has made them hearty and resourceful workers and community leaders. Likewise, younger female agriculturalists contested popular perceptions that only men are farmers.

Helen: I was reading some papers last night. Twenty percent of urban children in schools don't believe that farmers are necessary. . . . Five percent, only five percent of children in urban areas realised that women could be farmers. I mean we're starting to get into really bad areas here! [laughing] And twenty-five percent is another statistic. . . . Twenty-five percent of the rural workforce in the world are women, and they do eighty percent of the work.

Mary Ann: It's not 'manual labour.' It's sort of 'wo-manual labour!' [laughing]

While many participants, both male and female, recognised that Australian women are increasingly engaged in paid labour, this was often seen as a source of national moral decline. Edward, for instance, is a business owner who professed strong fundamentalist Christian convictions and demonstrated an interest in Marxist and fascist politics. On the afternoon I interviewed him, he was reading a collection of writings by Hitler and Mussolini. Commenting on the changing nature of family life, Edward noted, 'If both husband and wife work, then they haven't got time to come home and cook those delicious meals, traditional meals. Preparation, two hours. I mean, that's gone, gone out the door. But when that goes, so is that way of life gone.' In his explication of this lost way of life, he suggested that contemporary social changes have resulted in increasing numbers of drug users, unmarried mothers, gays and lesbians, environmental activists, and welfare recipients, all of whom he regarded as the antithesis of 'real' Australians.

Other participants echoed some of these themes, although in less forceful terms. A group of retired women, for example, suggested that because families are more materialistic now, 'because they want everything,' more mothers are working outside the home and leaving their children unattended or attended by strangers. They suggested that this lack of maternal attention is partially to blame for rising crime rates. An older male farmer suggested that the government is complicit in this decline of the family and the consequent decline of the nation, through the provision of public child care. He noted,

But then there's the Commonwealth government breaking up families, though. . . . They are looking after our children in creches, that type of thing. You know? They are trying to rear our children, and they are trying to educate them, and they are trying to not find a job for them because they pay them unemployment benefits, so--you know? The Commonwealth government is taking the children from us [Jack].

While women's paid labour is clearly viewed by many participants as worthy of remark, as exceptional and even cataclysmic in its consequences, women's unpaid domestic labour is largely seen as natural and unproblematic. As noted above, when focus groups watched an advertisement showing a woman minding her children, they commented that 'it wasn't anything,' it 'could have been . . . anywhere,' it was 'just family life,' totally unremarkable and natural. However, when participants watched an advertisement showing gender role reversal, with a man thinking about cooking dinner for a woman, both men and women, young and old, responded with laughter and expressions of disbelief. As one female public servant remarked, 'Australian men cook?!'

In sum, what emerges from participants' discussions of Australian working practice is that 'real' Australians are workers, and workers are male; furthermore, women's paid labour is seen by many participants as unusual and threatening, leading to the moral decline of the nation, while women's unpaid domestic labour is seen by most participants as natural and normal. At the same time, some female participants strongly protest their exclusion from images of Australian working life; they revise widely circulating images and insert themselves into discourses of national identity. In any case,

it is clear that accounts of Australian national identity are bound up with discourses of working practice, and such discourses are strongly gendered.

Just as the working practices of the nation are gendered in the popular imagination, they are also ethnicised. As discussed above, 'white' Australian participants frequently use the trope of the 'work ethic' to differentiate between 'white' and aboriginal Australians. 'White' (male) Australians are defined as 'workers,' and therefore as 'real' Australians, while aboriginal Australians are defined as non-productive members of society, as welfare recipients, and therefore not true Australians. As Ann, a high school student, remarked, 'aboriginals are actually the native Australians. But no one thinks of them as actual, as an Australian person.' 'Ethnics,' on the other hand, are said to be hard working, a trait which makes them both an asset and a threat to the national imagined community.

There is a high degree of consensus among participants that the migrants who came to Australia in the wake of World War II made a positive contribution to Australian society, particularly through their labour on large public works schemes. These migrants are respected, in part, because they are seen to have lived and worked together peacefully and then to have dispersed discreetly into wider Australian society. Some more recent migrants are respected for similar reasons. Hugh, a retiree, described the local Greek shop owners: 'They are always open, always obliging. They work hard.' And Leanne, the business owner quoted earlier, noted, 'The only Asian people we have here run the Chinese shop. But you never see them. Yeah, you never see them. They're only ever in the kitchen, as they should be [laughing].' Such migrants are welcomed, in other words, as compliant and obliging labourers, but only in so far as they are either contained, in post-war migrant labour projects or in their modern day corner shops and restaurant kitchens, or isolated from other 'ethnics' and assimilated into 'white' Australian society. When 'ethnic' workers group together, establishing their own business districts, many 'white' Australian participants view this as 'swamping' a suburb and 'getting out of hand.' Leanne and her husband and business partner, Nick, explained that this is the case

in Cabramatta, a suburb of Sydney sometimes called 'Vietnamatta' for its high concentration of Vietnamese-Australian residents.<sup>96</sup>

- Nick: Okay, you've got to go to Cabramatta in Sydney.
- Leanne: You've got to go. Please.
- Nick: And you won't get served in a shop, right.
- Leanne: If you want some more research, go and live near there for six months.
- Nick: Because you're Australian. Well, you don't speak the language. You don't speak Vietnamese, right?
- Leanne: You don't get service.
- Interviewer: So, you won't be served?
- Nick: You won't be served. You can't read the street signs because all the signs have been changed into--
- Leanne: And how our country can allow that, I have no idea.
- Nick: But they're not willing to disperse and do what they did in the 50s and 60s.

Recent migrants are also frequently seen as a threat to ('white' male) Australian employment. Voicing a sentiment fairly common among participants, Clem, a retiree, suggested that the government needs to cut the number of migrants to Australia in order to reduce the unemployment rate. 'They can't be bringing people out here when they can't find enough work and that for our own blokes here.' This competition for jobs between 'white' and 'ethnic' Australians is cited by many participants as a source of racism. Australian working practices, the true Australian work ethic, in other words, is seen to be threatened by an influx of migrant labourers; and in the face of such a threat, 'racism,' or the rejection of 'ethnics,' is seen by some as inevitable although usually undesirable. As Ruth, a young farmer who is married to a migrant from northern Europe, explained,

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<sup>96</sup> In the 1991 Census, 50,000 Vietnamese resided in Cabramatta (Bureau of Immigration Research 1994).

Ruth: It always amazes me that people are far less tolerant to people of Asian backgrounds, or people who look different to the European. It's very easy to assimilate if you've got a European background. But a couple of my children actually shocked me by the way they talk about Asians.

Interviewer: Really?

Ruth: Yeah, it's that, you know, it's the feeling that they're taking our jobs and they shouldn't be here and they should be sent home. And they really do, they can be quite racist against--but it seems only to be against the Asians. . . . And I think there's an underlying fear that, you know, [as] more and more come [laughing]--there will be higher unemployment.

Interviewer: Oh, so it's employment.

Ruth: It's a worry of the employment, because it's harder and harder to get jobs. And they just feel, you know, they shouldn't allow more immigrants in, I suppose. So let's go back to the White Australia policy that we used to have. And it's surprising how many people do agree with Pauline Hanson, even though I think she's a bit radical, myself.

It is worthwhile to note that many participants make similar comments, linking immigration to unemployment.<sup>97</sup> Like Ruth, however, most are careful to distance themselves from the views of Pauline Hanson's One Nation party, a party largely branded 'racist' in the Australian media.

Just as Australian working practice is gendered and ethnicised in Australian participants' discussions of national identity, so leisure practices are also strongly gendered and, to some degree, ethnicised. Among participants in all social locations, sport and the consumption of alcohol are cited as defining characteristics of Australian national identity. Male participants, in particular, link sport and alcohol together in their descriptions of Australianness. When asked what Australians are like, a male public servant responded, 'They like their sport; they like their beer' [Roy]. Likewise, a male employee answered, 'We do enjoy our leisure time, our sports. Everybody loves football

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<sup>97</sup> Such comments are reminiscent of previous authorised discourses of White Australia, suggesting that political and economic issues were and continue to be entangled with 'white' perceptions of, and policies regulating, 'ethnic' Australians.

and cricket and golf and bowls. And we like the odd beer' [Daryl]. When asked if Australians share any core values, a male business owner remarked, 'There is a big ethic of sport, and the love of sport . . . or the Aussie "come and sit down and have a beer with me, mate"' [Conrad]. In addition, both sport and beer consumption are constructed as largely male activities.

For example, while a group of male public servants offered up a long list of sports figures as exemplars of Australianness, figures including cricketers Don Bradman, Shane Warne and Tasmanian David Boon, tennis champion Rod Laver, and boxers Kostya Tszyu and Aussie Joe Bugner, they mentioned only one sportswoman, a gymnast they identified only as 'the little Vietnamese girl.' They qualified her inclusion, however, by noting that gymnastics is 'not recognised as being a traditional Australian sport' [Ted]. Interestingly, while the female gymnast's ethnic Otherness was emphasised, Russian-born Tszyu and Hungarian-born Bugner were both nonproblematically included in the list of 'Australian' sporting greats. It seems their masculinity (not only their sex, but the perceived virility of their sport) and/or their perceived 'whiteness' (as opposed to the gymnast's 'Asianness') moderate their Otherness, and allow them to be included as exemplars of Australianness.

Just as sport is gendered in folk discourses of national identity, so is alcohol consumption. While many female participants admitted to enjoying beer, beer drinking as a pastime was seen by both male and female participants as a masculine activity. Lisa, a teacher who demonstrated an interest in issues of gender equity, explained the links between sport, drinking and masculinity in Australia.

Lisa: And I suppose sport is in there too, very much part of our identity.

Interviewer: Is it?

Lisa: Especially for males, it is. They all play footy, cricket, whatever. And you're not really a proper man unless you are playing something, especially something rough.

Interviewer: So, chess doesn't count? [laughing]

Lisa: No. . . . It can't be just a wussy game. And I mean, there are rites of passage down here with the footy club and the cricket club, and the younger members actually having to drink themselves blotto a couple of times after the game on Saturday night to prove they're one of the boys.

What is clear, then, is that folk discourses of Australian national identity centre, in part, on leisure practices, and that these practices are largely male leisure practices. In fact, when asked to describe a typical Australian, one young woman noted that they have 'big guts' (from excessive beer consumption). When asked if this applied to both men and women, she answered, 'No, just the men' [Susie, an employee]. In her imagination, then, not only is the national body male, but it has been profoundly shaped by male leisure practice, beer drinking.

In addition to being gendered, participants described national leisure practices as ethnicised, to some extent. Many participants noted, for instance, that migrants can become 'true blue Aussies' through sport. Daryl, an employee, explained how the children of migrants can be accepted into the national community through their participation in sport. 'Their kids go to Australian schools, and they learn to be Australians. And yes, they sort of play football and cricket, and after a generation or two, they get asimulated [sic] to our way of life.'<sup>98</sup>

Not everyone was pleased about the increasing participation of migrants in sport, however. A group of retired men equated greater numbers of migrant sportsmen with escalating on-field violence, and the decline of Australian sportsmanship. Likewise, a female public servant suggested that 'ethnic' sports like soccer are displacing authentically Australian sports such as football.

A distinctive feature of the trope of everyday practice is the way in which participants used accounts of work and leisure practices to locate themselves within the national imagined community. Clearly to some participants, the proof of their

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<sup>98</sup> While the participant may have intended to say 'assimilated,' his neologism 'a-simulated' is intriguing for its suggestion that migrant ways of life come to resemble, or 'simulate' (white) Australian ways of life. The implication is that these 'simulated' ways of life are not genuinely 'Australian.'



Australianness was in their everyday practices. Both male and female farmers suggested, for instance, that Australianness is typified by farmers, with the unstated logic being, 'The typical Australian is a farmer; I am a farmer; therefore I am a typical Australian.'

Business men made similar claims about business men and workers as 'typical' Australians. Likewise, many participants professed a love of sport while suggesting that sport is a central part of Australian national identity (with the implied logic 'Australians love sport; I love sport; therefore I am an Australian'). Similar references were made to social drinking, particularly by male participants, who seemed to take pride in the Australian 'pub culture.'

Such comments reveal an intersection of widely circulating images of Australianness and the lived experiences of participants. However, sometimes participants' comments reveal a tension between the two, tensions that are not surprising given the processual and negotiated nature of discourses of national identity. One female participant noted, for instance, that Australians love sport, but later admitted that she does not. Another woman suggested that Australians are great beer drinkers, but then admitted that it is only men who usually drink.

That some participants repeated widely circulating images of Australianness which conflict with their own lived experiences is revealing in two ways. First, it suggests that folk discourses are inextricably entangled with mass mediated and authorised discourses, and that the discursive effects of these narratives of nation are so pervasive that they seem to override some participants' own lived experiences. Secondly, such tensions suggest another effect of widely circulating discourses of national identity. These discourses may serve as a way for marginalised groups, including women, to explain their own marginality, with the unstated logic of, 'Australians love sport/drinking; I do not love sport/drinking; therefore I am not (fully) Australian.'

### *Material and symbolic culture*

Discourses of national identity among Australian participants also centred on the national material and symbolic culture. Participants talked about the manufactured or modified

objects customarily used or consumed by the national community, including clothing and food and drink, among other things. They discussed the language, dialect or other linguistic practices or forms distinctive to the national community, including, for example, slang expressions and features of accent. And they mentioned nationally recognised art forms and the artists who create them, including, among others, Banjo Patterson and Henry Lawson and their poetry, and Tasmanian Richard Flannagan and his novels. Categories of gender and ethnicity cross-cut such discussions of the national material and symbolic culture both explicitly and implicitly.

When asked to describe a typical Australian, many participants painted a picture of distinctive national costumes and the gendered (male) bodies which bear them. The most popular images of the national costume centre on men in singlets, shorts and thongs, or men in Akubra hats and Dri'zabone coats.<sup>99</sup> Participants ranging from high school girls and boys to male public servants, female business owners and female farmers suggested that the typical Australian is a 'bloke in a singlet and stubbies.' In another variation on this masculine symbolic type, one female employee described how she imagines the typical Australian:

Well, if you put someone, say, in an Akubra hat, everyone knows that's Australian. And a Dri'zabone coat. And anything to do with the outback as well, I think. And if you put--it was like with, what was that movie? *Crocodile Dundee*. To me, that is so Australian. . . . Or who's that man? What's that show? *The Australian Outback Adventures*. Something like that [Carrie].

Such images of national identity focus exclusively on working class and largely rural ('white') males, evoking the archetypal swagman, ocker or larrikin discussed earlier, and excluding women and non-working-class urban dwellers.

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<sup>99</sup> Akubra hats and Dri'zabone coats are Australian brands associated in popular culture with rugged outdoorsmen. Both featured prominently in the staging of Australian national identity in the 2000 Sydney Olympics opening ceremony. Singlets (tank-tops) and 'stubbies' (toughly constructed shorts) are likewise associated with sheep shearing and manual labour. Thongs (or 'flip-flop' sandals) are associated with the beach, a salient symbol of Australianness even in the cooler climate of Tasmania where a 'beach lifestyle' has not developed.

While discussions of the national dress reveal the gendered nature of the imagined national community most explicitly, it is in participants' frequent comments on the national diet that an ethnicised national identity emerges. Participants in all social locations suggested that the national diet is a defining feature of Australian identity. 'Meat and three veg,' 'meat pies and sauce' and 'the Sunday roast lunch' are associated in participants' accounts with 'tradition,' with history and with an authentically Australian way of life.<sup>100</sup> Participants explicitly contrasted this purportedly typical or 'traditional' Australian diet with an 'ethnic' or 'multicultural' diet.

Some participants positively valued Australia's new culinary diversity, not only for its perceived nutritional benefits and its more varied flavours, but also as evidence of 'white' Australia's multicultural tolerance, a source of pride in most participants' accounts. Some participants, however, saw 'ethnic' foods as an invasion of the national way of life, a force which compromises both the national culture and the bodies of the ('white') citizenry. As Leanne explained:

We are being Asianised . . . Even in restaurants--and I can't eat Asian food. It's too rich for me . . . it's too spicy-rich, like Thai food and that. I can't eat it. In one end, out the other, stomach cramps, the whole thing. So I go, I have to go to restaurants where they serve, how can I say? A European-Australian type menu--meat and potatoes. Yes, I am an Aussie.

Leanne went on to voice her frustration at often being unable to find authentic Australian food in restaurants, as an increasing number of establishments incorporate Asian dishes into their menus. Her fear of this 'Asianisation' of the nation, therefore, coincides with her fear that Asian food makes her ill. In other words, introducing Otherness into the body through 'ethnic' food results in a dis-eased state.

Just as food was a powerful marker of Australianness and Otherness, language served as a salient symbol of national identity among participants. Participants suggested that the Australian accent reflects the national character; it is 'laid back', relaxed, open,

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<sup>100</sup> Many of these discourses are also gendered, for the preparation of such 'traditional' food is viewed by participants as women's work. As noted earlier, some participants suggest that the 'traditional' Australian diet is under threat as more women enter into paid labour.

and unpretentious. This 'voice' of the nation was strongly associated with home, with familiar social worlds. One female farmer noted, 'It's so nice when you come back from overseas and you just hear the voice, the Australian voice, you know. . . . It's great' [Mary Anne]. Her male colleague agreed, 'It's the biggest relief when you've been gone some time and you haven't heard an Australian accent or a New Zealand accent, and you finally hear one' [Jerry].

The foreign languages spoken by Australian migrants, on the other hand, were viewed by many participants as 'babble,' disturbing because 'Australians' cannot understand them. As a group of high school girls explained:

- Meg: [People] don't like it when they can't understand what somebody is saying.
- Ann: Yeah, that annoys me real bad.
- Meg: That's what annoys most people. Like you get off in town and you hear some Asians speaking in their language and you think, 'Wow. That's annoying.' And then they look at you, and you think, 'Are they talking about me?'
- Ann: And then they laugh.
- Meg: And . . . if they are about your age . . . you just assume they know English. So it annoys you even more to know they can speak English but they are choosing to speak their language in front of you. Because that makes you even more suspicious that they're talking about you.

What is notable here is the underlying assumption that Australian public spaces are English-language spaces, spaces in which Anglophone Australian culture is not only privileged, but is seen as the only appropriate option. Again the ideology of 'white' proprietorship is in evidence here. Many 'white' participants are personally offended by seeing and hearing Other languages in spaces which are defined as ('white') Anglophone Australian spaces. Comments such as those by the high school girls above suggest a sense of proprietorship over the nation, a right or a responsibility to police the Others who reside in ('white') Australian spaces.

For most participants, English language is so inextricably bound up with Australian national identity that it is argued that migrants cannot be Australian unless they speak English, or ‘speak Australian’ as several participants put it. However, even English language ability cannot guarantee a migrant’s acceptance into the national imagined community, for their Otherness is invariably exposed through the remnants of their native tongue. As Brenda, a business owner, noted, ‘You tend to think of people with accents as not being Australian.’

Finally, discourses of Australian national identity also centre on nationally recognised aesthetic forms and the artists who produce them. Such discourses are gendered in that among the many artists mentioned by participants, female artists are conspicuously absent. This reveals another articulation between folk and authorised discourses of national identity. As noted in Chapter Three, while Australian women have always actively contributed to the nation’s aesthetic culture (as well as its economic and political life), until recent decades their contributions were rarely acknowledged in official national histories and artistic canons.

Not only are imaginings of the national aesthetic culture gendered, however; they are also profoundly ethnicised. In participants’ narratives, the Otherness of ‘ethnics’ and aboriginal Australians is linked strongly with the paintings, dances, festivals, films and other artistic products of these groups. Such aesthetic forms are positively valued by almost all participants. As one business owner explained,

I often envy other cultures when they have Italian week or Greek week or whatever. And they have their costumes and their dances. I really envy that. We’ve got nothing like that. . . . You know, their tradition, it goes back for so many hundreds and hundreds of years. But we are only, white Australia is only 200. You know . . . we’ve got to look at the aboriginal people, the things that they value. You know if the aboriginal people were the majority in Australia, there would be that sort of costuming and everything [Rebecca].

Similarly, one teacher described what he considers the positive aspects of multicultural diversity.

Just the accepting of other people's cultures and beliefs, and that people can come here and practise, you know, their religion or their, you know, pursue their culture, but within our own culture. And to share it with other people, and for other people to be accepting and open to those sorts of things. To try their food, to watch their dances, to view their films, let them speak their language and respect them for that. . . . It add[s] a lot of colour [Phillip].

What is of interest in these two excerpts is both the commodification of cultural difference and the way 'white,' 'ethnic' and aboriginal Australians are positioned vis-à-vis such commodities. In the above comments, cultural diversity is reduced to a number of packaged aesthetic commodity forms--costumes, festivals, dances--with 'whites' positioned as consuming subjects, and 'ethnics' and aboriginal Australians positioned either as producers, or as objects of consumption themselves. Again, 'whites' 'let' these Others speak their native languages, and grant them permission to produce their distinctive cultural forms, but only 'within *our* own ['white'] culture.' However, if these Others engage in such cultural practices for their own purposes, many participants suggested that at best, this is not in the true spirit of multiculturalism, and at worst it is offensive to the wider Australian community (as in the case of language discussed above, or public religious practices, such as the veiling of Muslim women). When 'ethnic' Others engage in such practices for themselves, rather than for the consumption of 'white' Australians, 'whites' no longer control or 'allow' such activities, resulting in a threat to their presumed governing power.

In sum, then, in interview and focus group discussions, participants explain Australian national identity partly in terms of national material and symbolic culture. Descriptions of Australian material culture, language and aesthetic products and producers, are both gendered and ethnicised, privileging the 'white' masculine over the 'ethnic,' aboriginal or feminine. Such discourses, in other words, serve to legitimate and naturalise 'white,' masculine proprietorship over the national, particularly public, space.

### *The environment*

Finally, in interview and focus group discussions of Australianness, references to the physical environment cross-cut all other dimensions of national identity. Participants'

comments suggest that notions of physical space, the physical environment, are an important part of the way people think about both individual and national identity. In the transcript data, the environment serves as an affective symbol of national belonging, as a force believed to shape social action, and as a marker of identity boundaries. In these latter two, the distinction between the environment and ethnicity is blurred, as 'racial' Otherness and spatial Otherness intersect.

In participants' narratives, the physical environment is gendered inasmuch as certain spaces are delineated as masculine while others are seen to be feminine. It is the hot, dry spaces of the outback which emerge from participants' comments as the most powerful affective symbols of Australianness. As a farming couple remarked:

- Ruth:        When you think of Australia, you think of the outback and the farmers, the sheep farmers and the cattle farmers.
- Dave:        Yeah, and when they say 'outback,' you think 'Oh yeah. This is *real* Australia. Out back.'

These rural areas are strongly associated in participants' accounts with 'tradition,' with an authentically Australian way of life, and with masculinity. I have already examined such masculine national archetypes as the 'swagman,' the 'man on the land' and Crocodile Dundee, all of whom are firmly located in the rural spaces of Australia. Participants suggested, however, that the connections between rurality and masculinity are not merely discursive; in the lives of participants, especially female participants, rural Australian spaces are experienced as masculine spaces.

All of the teachers interviewed, and many public servants and farmers, discussed the links between rural isolation and male dominance, as manifested in domestic violence, women's exclusion from positions of power, sexism in the work place, and girls' limited educational and career opportunities. Sexual inequality was seen by most of these participants to be socially backward, a sign that rural areas lag 'behind the times.' Starting from the metropole and moving outwards in space, therefore, is like moving backwards in time: backwards toward both valued social 'traditions,' such as close-knit families and cohesive communities, and toward the negatively evaluated practices of

racism and sexism.<sup>101</sup> As Lisa explained, it is the very isolation of her rural community which accounts for what she considers the retrograde attitudes of many of the people around her.

The attitude [is] . . . 'We will go by our own traditions' . . . 'This is the way we do it'. . . And I think the actual physical barriers of the [Plains] sort of . . . I mean people didn't go out of [Plainsview] very much, because of those physical, the mountains, the barriers. . . . If they live down here, they don't go to town much. And so there is a kind of mental barrier that, 'This is the way we do it here, and we are not going to worry about what people on the other side of the hill do.

While the masculine rural spaces of Australia serve as potent affective symbols of national belonging, spaces associated with the feminine are seldom mentioned by participants in their discussions of national identity. That women are associated with domestic space is evident in the comments of both male and female participants, who suggest that child rearing and housework are largely women's responsibilities. As discussed above, participants suggest that this domestic role is common to women throughout the world; and because such feminine domestic spaces are, in a sense, universal, they do not serve as affective symbols of Australian national identity.

In addition to serving as a symbol of national belonging, the environment is also used by participants to explain the Australian national character. Many participants expressed at least a vague sense that Australians have been shaped by their natural environment. In one fairly typical comment, Paula noted, '[Australians are] accepting and tolerant, fairly outgoing, physically outgoing. I think that's to do with the environment we are in. . . . We've had to make the most of the environment, the coastal environment and the inland and the desert and the pastoral. . . . That's all shaped who we are, as well.' Other participants provided more specific examples of the way Australian spaces have shaped the national character. As discussed earlier, Louise, an older farmer, suggested that because of Australia's harsh environment and vast spaces, Australians

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<sup>101</sup> Such comments are undoubtedly coloured by Tasmania's geographic and economic marginality, as discussed later in this chapter.



(particularly Australian women) have become hard-working, inventive and community-minded.

Similarly, participants frequently used geography to explain, and even to some extent legitimate, 'white' Australian attitudes toward 'non-white' migrants. Participants including teachers, public servants, farmers and employees suggested that Australia's so-called 'racism' is better understood as inexperience with, or ignorance of, other cultures, and that this lack of experience is a direct result of Australia's geographic isolation. As one male farmer explained, 'I think generally people are frightened of what they don't know. And Australia . . . being an island [with] very few people . . . when you get immigrants, and it doesn't matter if they are white, black or brindle, they stand out' [Henry].

In addition to using notions of space to explain aspects of the Australian national character, participants used space to talk about sub-national identities in Australia. Space thus serves as a marker of identity boundaries, and particularly as a marker of identity differences between city and country areas and between Tasmania and 'the mainland.' Participants in all social locations suggested that there are profound differences between the people, communities and overall cultures of urban and rural Australia. It is perhaps not surprising that among rural participants, urban ways of life are seen to be 'generic like airports' and somehow unauthentic, while rural ways of life are seen to be authentically Australian, with roots in the nation's primordial past. As Albert, an older farmer explained,

There's two types of Australians. . . . There is more the city type, I suppose, and there is the country type. The city Australian, I think he probably wouldn't be that much different to anyone else around the world. . . . Well, cities tend to be fairly similar around the world, don't they. . . . Whereas in the country . . . things tend to remain, tend to remain much the same. So the differences there have been in the past are perpetuated, if anywhere, in the country.

Urban spaces were even conceived by many rural participants to be akin to foreign lands, as the comments of these female business owners suggested:

- Rebecca: If you leave here and go to the mainland, just have a walk around Melbourne and it just--it honestly astounds me.
- Catherine: Well if you fly into Sydney airport or Melbourne airport, you feel like you could have flown into Hong Kong or somewhere like--
- Rebecca: Yes, but you come back to Tasmania and you don't--it's just--you don't see it [the ethnic diversity].
- Catherine: It's just Australia.
- Rebecca: Yes, it's just Australia.

The 'ethnic' spaces of Melbourne and Sydney, in other words, are perceived to be foreign, while the 'white' spaces of Tasmania are 'just Australia.' Such comments highlight the intersection of space and ethnicity, where ethnicity has the power to render domestic space foreign. Participants in all social locations associated the mainland, and particularly Sydney and Melbourne, with 'ethnics' (especially Asian migrants) and, to some extent aboriginal Australians. A high school girl noted, for example, that in Melbourne, 'You find it hard to see an English person; everyone is Asian' [Ann]. A female farmer suggested that when she goes to Melbourne it is a challenge to play 'Spot the Aussie' on the street [Amanda]. In other words, she has trouble finding any *real* ('white') Australians. Likewise, a male farmer noted his surprise at finding so few farmers with 'English-sounding names' in his travels through northern Victoria, western New South Wales and northern Queensland [Bill].

Participants associated the foreignness of such 'ethnic' spaces with a sense of uneasiness or even danger. Meg, a high school student, noted that when she hears Asians speaking their native languages in public, it makes her feel, 'out of place.' In other words, when language and ethnicity transform her ('white') Australian social space into an Asian, or a foreign, space, she experiences a sense of socio-spatial dislocation. Similarly, Ted, a public servant, described the potential dangers of Cabramatta ('Vietnamatta'), in the following way:

I mean, it's like the Vietnamatta type of scenario in Sydney where there is seen to be such big crime, a source of crime. Because here are all these

Vietnamese people, and they are obviously getting up to something together. And there's drugs and there are all sorts of things. And the perception for the rest of the community is that there are a lot of things going on in there that we don't know about. And that it is an obvious nest of vipers, or something like that [laughing].

Such ethnic typifications are often branded 'racist;' however this is overly simplistic and of little use analytically. If categories of 'race' alone inform Ted's fear of this Vietnamese suburb, why then does he express admiration for a young Vietnamese-Australian gymnast? The answer lies in the intersecting notions of space and 'race,' specifically in the distribution of 'racial' Others in an imagined 'white' space. The notion of 'white' proprietorship of the nation rests, in part, on discursive constructions of the nation as a 'white' space. When this illusion of 'whiteness' is disrupted by the presence of concentrations of 'non-whites,' these ethnic Others are perceived as a threat to 'white' proprietorship. They are then marginalised, not solely for their perceived 'race' but also for their distribution within the imagined 'white' space.<sup>102</sup> It is possible, therefore, for Ted to praise the achievements of a single Vietnamese-Australian, and even include her within his vision of Australianness, and yet to characterise Vietnamese-Australian neighbourhoods as dangerous, mysterious and un-Australian.

Likewise, a number of participants expressed concern for a gradual loss of their ('white') control over Australian spaces. Describing the situation in Sydney, Leanne, for instance, noted, 'It's not just the Asian people. My sister is now finding it with Greeks and those sort of people. Muslims are really--the Moslem people are just getting really out of hand up there.' Such comments suggest a perceived loss of ('white') control over ethnic Others; for 'out of hand' equates to out of ('white') control.

These remarks form a neat contrast to participants' descriptions of a predominantly 'white' Tasmania, where 'non-white' migrants are more dispersed, and thus perceived to be less threatening, as this discussion with a group of male public servants suggests:

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<sup>102</sup> This is consistent with Hage's (1998: 37-38) observations on 'categories of spatial management,' discussed in Chapter Three of this thesis.

- William: I think. . . probably down here, when I think about it. . . there is probably more respect for some of the foreign people than there are for the locals.
- Ted: That's right. Maybe some of the ethnic community aren't criticised so much, because there are so few of them.
- William: Maybe. But I mean it is also, like [Mike] at the shop next door, his [Pakistani] wife, you know, you never hear anyone say a bad word about her. And they're sort of in the shop, you know, seven days a week.
- Ted: Like, Tasmania is generally regarded as a very Anglo-Saxon community. But there was a large wave of ethnic migration for the Hydro.<sup>103</sup>
- Interviewer: So, how are they treated by the community, migrants who have settled here? Are they a part of the community?
- William: Well, I think in this area, they are accepted exceptionally well.
- Ted: I don't think the community regards them as anything different from the rest of the community. . . . It's probably different in the bigger cities, where you've got more enclaves, more sort of groupings. Particularly the ethnic communities, where it stands out. In a rural community like this, there is just somebody there, and somebody there. We are almost just a milieu of different origins.
- Interviewer: Do you think in big cities, or on the mainland . . . would you think there would be more tolerance or less tolerance in a place like that? For migrants. Toward migrants.
- Ted: I would say there would be less tolerance, because they would be seen as more of a threat.

What is apparent in this exchange is that in spaces such as Tasmania which are still imagined to be predominantly 'white,' 'race' is not perceived to be problematic. Participants suggested that it is only when ethnic Others cluster together in 'enclaves,' such as those thought to be found in Australia's urban centres, that they become a threat, implicitly a threat to 'white' control. What isn't clear from this exchange, however, is whether 'race' is actually as unproblematic in this rural community as participants

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<sup>103</sup> Migrant labourers were recruited during the construction of Tasmanian hydro-electric facilities.

suggest. For, while William suggested that a local Pakistani woman must be accepted in the community because no one denigrates her, it is doubtful whether such an argument would be offered as proof that a 'white' member of the community was accepted. Such comments may reveal an underlying expectation that 'non-white' migrants will naturally be denigrated; when they are not, this signals their acceptance into the community.

Even while participants suggested that 'ethnic' urban environments are dangerous, generic and not authentically Australian, they acknowledged that such urban areas are at the economic and cultural centre of Australian society, while Tasmania and other rural areas are on the periphery. As one high school boy remarked, 'I suppose Tasmanian people are a lot like [people in] regional New South Wales, because they are very isolated from civilisation, and so are we, in a way' [Colin]. Likewise, participants including public servants and farmers, discussed the perception that in order to be successful, one must be able to 'make it' on the mainland, as these public servants suggested:

Cam: I see a lot of people, as far as children growing up, and they go to the mainland, [and they say] 'Good on ya!' Pat on the back. 'Go for it!' You know? And I notice that a lot from here, which is really sad. Because there's just so many young people that do go . . . and people see it, from here, as 'making it on the mainland.'

Audrey: Yeah.

Cam: Make it in Sydney, make it in Melbourne, you've made it. And that's really sad.

Audrey: Yeah, people see opportunities being outside Tasmania.

Likewise, other participants suggested that Tasmania is 'backward,' 'second-rate,' 'the armpit of the universe,' a space so marginal that it is occasionally left off national maps. Public servants, business owners, employees, farmers and retired people all expressed anger and indignation at Tasmania's frequent omission from Australian maps. 'Where are we? We don't exist?' Cam asked, then answered her own question, 'And we don't!' This symbolic obliteration of Tasmania only highlights its marginality.

While participants suggested that Tasmania's spatial location accounts, in part, for its marginal status within the nation, they also drew on notions of space to reclaim power from core urban locations. As noted above, participants often weaved together discourses of 'racial' Otherness and discourses of spatial Otherness, by defining mainland urban spaces as 'ethnic' and thus not genuinely Australian. In so doing, participants inverted notions of core and periphery: Tasmania becomes the Real, the embodiment of primordial ('white') Australianness, while mainland urban centres are refigured as mere corruptions of the original. Tasmania's marginality, in other words, is moderated through the intersecting discourses of space and 'race' which characterise the ideology of 'white' proprietorship.

### Discourses of National Identity: Sustaining and Challenging Social Hierarchies

Thus far in this chapter, I have discussed five dimensions of Australian national identity, each of which is crosscut by notions of gender and ethnicity. My concern here, however, is not to determine whether such images are somehow correct or accurate representations of the nation, but rather to examine their effects. In order to understand the symbolic and material implications of such gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity, it is important to explicitly discuss how these discourses reflect and reinforce hierarchies of gender and ethnicity in Australia. It is equally important, however, to examine the ways participants actively challenge such discourses and the hierarchies of power which sustain and are sustained by them.

It is clear from the transcript data that gendered discourses of national identity reflect many participants' own experiences of gender inequality in Australia. The dominance of masculine imagery in discourses of national identity—the dominance of male archetypes, of implicitly male values such as 'mateship,' of male labour and leisure pursuits, of male artists, and masculine physical spaces—mirrors the everyday experiences of male dominance recounted by participants. The nature of these accounts vary, however, with the social locations (the age, gender and occupation) of participants.

As an occupational group, the teachers interviewed discussed gender inequality most explicitly. The male teachers interviewed expressed both an intellectual awareness of the impact of male dominance on the lives of their female students, and a desire for change. As Phillip noted, 'It's been one of the main goals that we've had as teachers at the school . . . to set a different agenda, because there's so much waste of talent of women and girls in [Plainsview]. They've just been held back.' The female teachers interviewed, however, demonstrated both an intellectual and an experiential understanding of issues of gender inequality. Lisa, for instance, explained how male dominance generally impedes the career prospects of women, and she specifically recounted how it has negatively impacted on her own career. Similarly, Paula expressed an intellectual understanding of principles of gender inequality in the home, but she also confessed that she still does most of the housework, fearing that if she does not, people will think she is 'not very good.'

No clear patterns in experiences and understandings of male dominance emerge among the other occupational groups represented in the sample; however, there are clear trends by the age and gender of participants. Overall, the youngest participants (high school students) and the oldest participants (retirees) spoke very rarely of gender relations in Australia. Amongst this subset of participants, there was little discussion of male dominance in Australia, nor of the gendered nature of the most common archetypes of Australianness.<sup>104</sup> That issues of gender inequality seem to lack salience among these participants may be the result of a more pressing source of inequality in their lives, age. In other words, youth and the elderly, who are already marginalised in Australian society and who are not yet, or no longer, participating in paid labour, may not perceive gender inequality to have a significant impact on their lives.

In contrast to youth and the elderly, participants of working age referred to both patriarchal social relations in Australia, and to the gendered nature of Australian national

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<sup>104</sup> However, one retired woman, Eloise, did recount an incident in which one of her female co-workers petitioned for women to receive equal pay. Eloise considered the woman to be a 'pretty silly bunny' who used profanity to 'show off' in front of the men in their work place. The woman was eventually fired, which Eloise considered a just outcome.

archetypes. While it is perhaps impossible to determine whether the greater salience of gender inequality is due to age, engagement in paid labour, or other factors, it is possible to observe that within this subset of participants, men and women demonstrated different experiences and understandings of gender inequality. While female business owners, female public servants, and female farmers explicitly criticised Australian gender inequality, male business owners, male public servants and male farmers either treated gender inequality as an unproblematic feature of Australian social life, or, in fact, actively engaged in patriarchal discourses and practices. Among one focus group of men, for example, the discussion of national identity was peppered with sexually explicit jokes, and with references to sexual conquests; and as these same participants discussed the fact that Australian men do very little housework, one man added, 'I'm not married yet. I haven't found one that's going to cook my tea.' The dominance of the masculine in discourses of national identity is inextricably linked to the masculine dominance experienced by both male and female participants in their everyday lives.

Gendered discourses of national identity reinforce gender inequality in Australia primarily by legitimating the primacy of the masculine. While it would be naive to suggest that all individuals understand these widely circulating discourses of national identity in the same way, it is clear that the overwhelmingly masculine images of Australianness described in this and the previous chapter exclude women from, or at least marginalise them within, the narrative of nation. If the widely employed image of a 'real' Australian is a beer-drinking, sport-loving male farmer in the outback, how does the suburban housewife or the inner-city small business woman read herself into this narrative? As I have already suggested, some women appear to use such gendered discourses of nation to make sense of their own marginality within the nation. As noted earlier, if a woman accepts the notion that 'all Australians love sport' (and a number of female participants indeed make such statements), but she herself dislikes sport, she has a ready explanation for her marginality within the nation: her own failure to conform to the likes and dislikes, the values and practices of 'real' Australians. In this way, the relatively subtle gendering of discourses of national identity are ideologically much more powerful



than more blatant images of exclusion would be; for while exclusion or discrimination based on ascribed characteristics (such as gender and ethnicity) might be resisted in a climate of heightened awareness of universal equality and human rights, discrimination based on personal failings is likely to be seen as acceptable and consistent with the spirit of meritocracy.

The gendered discourse of Australian 'egalitarianism' likewise reinforces the legitimacy of current gender hierarchies. For, as argued earlier, if everyone agrees that Australia is egalitarian, then the implication is that those in power have earned their privileged positions by competing on an even playing field, and those who lack social power are marginalised because they have failed to successfully compete. Women's marginality, again, can be easily attributed not to systematic, structured inequality, but to the personal failings of the individual.

Just as gendered discourses of national identity reflect and reinforce gender hierarchies in Australia, so ethnicised discourses of national identity reflect and reinforce inequalities based on ethnicity. Using the same logic as above, if discourses of national identity suggest that the 'real' Australian is a 'white' English-speaking Australian, then those who are not 'white' and who do not speak English (or eat meat pies or play Australian Rules football), may define themselves and be defined by others as not fully Australian. Again, the discourse of egalitarianism reinforces the notion that those 'ethnics' who are marginalised are not marginalised by virtue of their ethnicity, but rather because they have failed to adopt the values and practices of 'real' Australians, and to successfully compete with 'real' Australians on an even playing field. This notion clearly informs Georgia's view, quoted earlier, that it is not the colour of migrants' skin that provokes 'racism,' but rather the way they violate the principle of 'a fair go' by claiming special privileges from the state.

### *Contestations*

Even while widely circulating discourses of national identity serve to legitimate and thus sustain current social hierarchies in which 'white' is privileged over 'non-white' and male

over female, participants also construct discourses of national identity which challenge these very hierarchies. While some of these contestations have already emerged from the discussion here, it is worth examining in greater detail the more elaborated counter-narratives of nation which certain participants construct. These narratives should not be seen simply as fissures in the otherwise smooth surface of consensus, however, for they are a key component in the dialogic process of negotiating national identities.

In the interview and focus group data, I have found both generalised contestations made by a large number of participants in a wide range of social locations, and more detailed, more reflexive, contestations raised by a small number of individuals in certain specific social locations. As a rule, participants voiced generalised contestations after first constructing narratives of nation that centre largely on the popular archetypes, values and practices described in this chapter. Almost as an afterthought, or an attempt to distance themselves from the narratives they helped construct, a large number of participants added such comments as:

[But] you can't say that we have just one Australian way [Meg, a high school student];

But I don't think a lot of people are really like that [Lisa, a teacher];

[But] that's a myth . . . stereotypical type images [Roger, a teacher];

That's what everybody *portrays* as being Australian [Ted, a public servant];

That is an American's view of Australia [Rebecca, a business owner];

But this is surely the image that is being portrayed *to* us and *of* us on our TVs and films. . . . I believe it's a distorted impression [Charles, a business owner];

I don't think we can sort of say 'Australian national identity'. . . because it is so parochial [Henry, a farmer].

Although many participants raised such objections, they less often offered concrete alternatives to the clichéd images around which they had structured their discourses of national identity. In fact, when Rebecca, quoted above, suggested that such

common stereotypes represent ‘an American’s view of Australia,’ Georgia, one of her colleagues, responded, ‘But even if that’s right, that is the most Australian [you can get].’ Clichés, in other words, were seen as the most appropriate way to talk about national identity.

Georgia’s statement says something about the discursive nature of national identity, and highlights the importance of analysing not only discursive products, but also discursive processes. National identities are discourses, collections of signs. Since the meaning of signs (words, pictures, and so on) are arbitrary, in order to engage in discourse, individuals must already have at least a working agreement about what such signs mean. Therefore, when people are asked to discuss national identity, they primarily draw on the cache of already agreed-upon signs which have constituted such discourses in the past. The generally high degree of consensus about national identity described in this chapter is therefore accounted for by the shared nature of the sign system from which discourses of national identity are constructed. In other words, hegemonic discourses of national identity establish the terms of reference for negotiations of national identity, the tropes marking agreement over what to disagree about. Counter-narratives, whether generalised or detailed, are possible because hegemony is never perfect or complete.

It is worth reiterating that participants’ use of widely circulating discourses of national identity may also represent the framing of their experiences in the language and imagery of authorised discourses of national identity, for the consumption of a foreign researcher. This highlights, again, the embodied nature of the research process. The data I derived from interviews and focus groups is undoubtedly shaped by participants’ perceptions of me and my research agenda.

In addition to the kinds of generalised contestations described above, some participants offered more detailed and more reflexive objections to dominant discourses of national identity. Three participants, in particular, formulated such contestations: Audrey and Dominic, both public servants; and Edward, a business owner. Because their arguments are both subtle and, in places, shifting, it is worthwhile quoting from them at some length.

That myth of the Australian outback . . . [has] been hyped to be that way . . . [but] the reality is not necessarily the perception. Like 'multicultural,' 'Aussie battler,' 'mateship,' that type of thing is what Australians tend to perceive their national image as, whereas that's not necessarily the reality with the national image. . . . But that's what we want to portray, or we are portrayed as. . . . There's a national image, but I don't think that it's true for most people. . . . It's more of a media image than it is a true image. . . . [Maybe] the image we portray with that mateship and battling and stuff like that is because we're disconnected with the image of Britain. . . . Like none of us really identify with the British type of image. . . . And it's probably because we're all convicts [Audrey, 26 year old public servant].

The stereotypical Australian culture, I think, has never existed. . . . I haven't seen it. . . . [There's] the blokey, blokey Australian type . . . [and] the old bronzed-Aussie-on-the-beach sort of thing . . . [but] I have never seen much of that. You know, you see one or two people, but . . . [that's just] something that Australia has marketed as culture. . . . So I don't know. Maybe we're going through withdrawal symptoms of the myth that we created. . . . And it's like, I don't know, what are we really? . . . To me, it's different things to different people [Dominic, 36 year old public servant].

Another thing that I think must be said about Australians is that egalitarianism, or the idea of egalitarianism as an Australian trait is fairly silly, I think. Because Australians have a history of the boss and the worker. . . . And I think it is a great mistake to see Australia as an egalitarian society, because it's definitely not, and it's probably getting worse now. . . . And mugs like us with small businesses . . . are getting hit. So, yes, we see ourselves as the battlers, I think. Which is a true Aussie battler. . . . We've been through a school system that, like all school systems, really tends to censor what we take in. . . . So we have been fed with Lawson, you know, the great Australian poets, the great Australian writers. And they really wrote on the Australian sort of theme of the 'battler' and 'out the bush,' and beating great odds and droughts, etcetera, etcetera. So, you know, most of our traditions and our mythologies in this country are based on the country, are based on the outback. . . . I think that our Australian image is warped, in a way. It's untrue. Because Australians . . . are city people more than any body else in the world, just about. They've got Sydney, Melbourne, all the population is there. But we have got this image of ourselves outback. . . . We have that love of the outback. I think all Australians love the outback [Edward, 55 year old businessman].

There are distinct differences between these three participants' narratives. Audrey and Dominic, for example, stressed the collective construction of national identity (it is 'what we want to portray' or 'the myth we created'), while Edward suggested that it has been imposed from above (it is something 'we have been fed'). In fact, whether

consciously or not, Edward exemplified his own argument by self-identifying as a small-businessman 'battler,' a strong theme in the authorised discourses of nation constructed by the Howard government. However, all of these narratives can be read as attempts to critique specific aspects of widely circulating discourses of Australian national identity, and to locate such discourses within a larger social or historical context, something which other participants did not explicitly do.

In seeking an explanation for the more complex contestations of these particular individuals, I examine their social locations. By conventional sociological measures, no strong commonalities emerge. The three participants are all of working age, but only two share the same occupation; only one of the three attended university, while the other two completed secondary schooling; two are Australian-born, while one is a migrant; and two are male and one is female. It is more productive, therefore, to broaden the way social location is conceptualised, to consider another key variable, marginality.

All of these individuals are positioned, to some degree, on the margins of their community. All three, for instance, moved to Plainsview within the last ten years, and all three suggested that newcomers to the area are not readily accepted by the established community. Furthermore, it is suggestive that of these participants, Audrey is a woman, Dominic is a migrant, and Edward is a man with what might be perceived as extremist religious and political views. In fact, Edward's marginality was particularly noticeable in the way he was physically isolated during a focus group discussion; he sat on one side of the table, while all of his colleagues sat on the opposite side. While these three individuals represent only a small subset of all the Australian participants, and while some individuals seem generally more reflexive than others, one conclusion is that those who are marginalised within widely circulating discourses of national identity by virtue of their sex, ethnicity or political and religious affiliations, are more likely to strongly contest such discourses.

Interestingly, even while these three participants contested widely circulating discourses of national identity, they also continued to draw on them in their narratives of nation: Audrey evoked the nation's convict heritage; Dominic later suggested that the

‘cockies’ are the ‘essence’ of Australianness; and, even while debunking the ‘mythologies’ of ‘the battler’ and ‘the outback,’ Edward claimed to be ‘a true Aussie battler’ who, along with all Australians, loves the outback. This is not to suggest that widely circulating discourses of national identity are inescapable or unassailable, or that they are imposed on the masses in a top-down fashion. Instead, this reveals two key characteristics of discourses of national identity: they consist of imbricated authorised, folk and mass mediated narratives of nation; and they are negotiated and processual, and therefore inherently unstable and contradictory. Thus counter-narratives of nation are not merely transitory and ineffective contestations; they have the potential to redirect the process of discursive negotiation, and therefore to alter the product of that negotiation, widely circulating discourses of national identity.

### Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter, I have argued that discourses of Australian national identity are constructed, in part, through folk discourses of nation, discourses which can be ordered according to five key themes: national archetypes and the national character; social relations and social ethics; everyday practice; material and symbolic culture; and the environment. Like authorised and mass mediated discourses of national identity, these folk discourses of Australian national identity are frequently gendered and ethnicised in ways that reflect and reproduce both patriarchal ideology and the ideology of ‘white’ proprietorship of the nation. Many research participants constructed the imagined community in ways that served to naturalise their own social position. Widely circulating ‘white’ masculine discourses of national identity were used to explain or even legitimate both ‘white’ male privilege and the symbolic and material marginalisation of women and ethnic minorities in Australia.

However, evidence presented here suggests that discourses of Australian national identity are malleable; they are constantly in-flux and are employed in complex ways by Australians as they make sense of their own locations within the national imagined

community and construct accounts of Australianness for the consumption of a foreign scholar. Those in marginalised groups, in particular, actively contest widely circulating discourses of national identity, and, in some cases construct more inclusive counter-narratives of nation.

The data presented in this chapter suggest a high degree of overlap between folk, mass mediated and authorised discourses of national identity. The same activities, archetypes, settings and ethics that feature in the state and academic texts and television advertisements analysed in earlier chapters, surface in folk discussions of national identity. However, this imbrication was frequently problematised by participants themselves. Many participants demonstrated an awareness of the ways mass mediated, political and academic discourses interact with folk discourses of national identity. They categorised widely circulating discourses of national identity as ‘clichés’ or ‘myths,’ and set them against their lived experiences to generate new pastiches and new juxtapositions relative to discourses of ‘Australianness.’

## CHAPTER SIX FOLK DISCOURSES OF JAPANESE NATIONAL IDENTITY

In the previous chapter, I examined gendered and ethnicised folk constructions of Australian national identity. In this chapter, I examine the ways national identity is constructed in Japanese participants' narratives of nation, first focusing on gendered discourses of nation and then on ethnicised constructions of Japaneseness.<sup>105</sup> As in the preceding chapter, my goal is not to determine whether such narratives are somehow 'accurate' or not, but rather to examine both the ways participants accept, reject and refigure such discourses in the process of making sense of their social worlds, and the ways such discourses reflect, reinforce and challenge the subordination of women and ethnic minorities in Japan.

### Gendered Discourses of Japanese National Identity

#### *National archetypes and the national character*

While the Australian transcript data yielded a wealth of predominantly 'white' male national archetypes, in Japanese focus groups and interviews, participants drew on relatively few national archetypes to talk about national identity; and, furthermore, these archetypes reveal a complex relationship between gender and discourses of nation in Japan.

The only four national archetypes Japanese participants consistently drew on were the *samurai*, the 'salaryman' (a salaried male company worker), the implicitly male 'traditional' artisan, and the *kimono*-clad woman.<sup>106</sup> For instance, Ms. Doi, a high

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<sup>105</sup> The discussion of ethnicised discourses of Japanese national identity is made more difficult by the conceptual slippage between the Japanese terms for 'race' and 'ethnicity,' explained in greater detail below. Due to these complexities, I address gendered discourses and ethnicised discourses in separate sections of this chapter.

<sup>106</sup> Images of such archetypes appear in the selection of television advertisements shown to Japanese focus groups, which may go some way toward explaining why they appear so consistently throughout focus group transcripts. Individual interviewees who did not see the advertisements rarely drew on such archetypes in their discussions of Japaneseness.



school student, associated Japaneseness with the *samurai* because, 'The *samurai* is unique to Japan,' or as Mr. Ando, a business owner, put it, 'The *samurai* is at the top of Japanese culture.' Young male farmers and male business owners, on the other hand, suggested that Japan is a 'salaryman society' (*sarariman shakai*), while a group of male teachers discussed 'the typical Japanese salaryman.' Meanwhile, Mr. Fujita, a high school student, associated the 'traditional' artisan with Japaneseness because 'He keeps the traditional crafts alive . . . the crafts passed down through the generations.' Perhaps because one advertisement shown to focus groups featured a male craftsman sharpening a knife, many participants also associated the male artisan archetype with sword-making and thus with the *samurai*.

Finally, participants in all social locations noted the centrality of the *kimono* as a symbol of Japaneseness; as one teacher remarked, 'Japanese people love *kimono* . . . even though we don't wear *kimono* in everyday life' [Mr. Takahashi]. In contemporary Japan, while men very occasionally wear *kimono*, it is predominantly women who are associated with this distinctive garment and with the 'traditional' Japaneseness it represents. In pointing out the difficulties of describing Japanese national identity, Mr. Ando, a business owner, described a fantasy of Japaneseness in which 'tradition,' the *kimono* and subordinate femininity are bound together in the narrative of nation.

It depends on how you judge 'Japaneseness.' . . . There is an ideal form of 'Japan,' or what we want Japan to be like. But there were traditions in the olden days that we have never experienced. . . . [For example,] Japanese men wish women to be neatly dressed, to bow respectfully, to wear *kimono*, and to wait for us at home. And we want things made by good craftsmen so they'll last for many generations. . . . [But] the question is whether we should judge these as 'Japaneseness' or whether we should compare them with our present lifestyle. It makes a big difference.

Such comments suggest that the 'ideal' imagined community is not only embodied in the gendered archetypes of the *kimono*-clad woman and the male artisan, but is also reflected in long-standing patriarchal social relations. However, Mr. Ando also highlighted the tensions between fantasy and reality, between discourses of nation and everyday practices.

Other participants also pointed out the clichéd nature of discourses of national identity in Japan. Discussing an advertisement which featured a *samurai*, a teacher remarked, 'If American people made commercials with Japanese images, it would be like that' [Mr. Sato]. Likewise, male employees suggested that this advertisement was 'like a foreign film;' and Mr. Hosokawa, a young farmer, suggested that the *samurai* character seemed like 'a foreigner's image of a Japanese person.' A group of teachers similarly discussed such hackneyed images of Japaneseness, and concluded that, paradoxically, it is *because* such images are exotic even to Japanese people that they come to be seen as authentically Japanese.

Ms. Wada: If you look at ads . . . with *kimono* and cherry blossoms, and so on, foreigners would think they were Japanese [Nihon-ppoi], but Japanese people in general don't really think that.

Ms. Matsumoto: Like that knife ad, the 'craftsmanship' and the 'spirit.' Whose Japan is that?

Ms. Wada: [And the noodle ad with the *samurai*] is like a Kurosawa film, like *Yojimbo*. . . . I suppose they made this ad . . . because they think there are a lot of people in Japan who like Kurosawa films. But they may be wrong.

Ms. Hayashi: But the strangest one was the [knife] ad. . . . That's a world even Japanese people don't know.

Ms. Matsumoto: Because we're not used to that [traditional Japanese culture], we think it's Japanese.

Ms. Wada furthermore suggested that such 'nostalgic' images of Japaneseness have become more common recently. She explained, 'These are really tough times, so they [the advertisers] try to make us feel somehow at ease' (*hottosaseru tokoro wo nerateiru*) through their use of such images. Similarly, a young male farmer remarked,

If you say 'Japan' people think of traditional things such as *kimono* or *samurai*. . . . [When we see these kinds of images] we feel at ease (*anshin suru*), even though we are not dressed in *kimono* or wearing a sword with a *chonmage* hairstyle. When we see *tatami*, we feel at ease. . . . We feel

deeply relaxed, we feel at ease watching those images. When we see them, we feel 'This is Japan. This is where we are' [Mr. Hosokawa].<sup>107</sup>

These participants suggested, in other words, that clichéd images of 'traditional' Japan are comforting to Japanese people in these 'really tough times' (*sugoku kibishii jidai*). Both masculine and feminine national archetypes seem to assuage the anxieties of participants, and make them feel 'at ease.'

Not only national archetypes are gendered both in the masculine and the feminine, however; discussions of the national character reveal both male and female imagery. Participants described a number of national character traits which apply equally to men and women. According to participants, Japanese people 'don't have much personality/individuality' (*kosei*) [high school girls]; they 'want to do the same thing everyone else does' [high school boys]; they are 'easily fooled' [female teachers] and 'easily influenced' [male teachers]; they 'tend to act as a group' [female teachers] or 'do things in a group' [female public servants]; they 'don't express how they really feel' [male public servants] and they 'don't speak out' [female employees]. At least two commonly cited national characteristics, however, are implicitly gendered, hard work and patience/endurance (*gaman*).

Among the participants interviewed, 'hard work' and working 'too hard' were strongly associated with the working world of the salaryman. Participants in a wide range of social locations evoked the image of the overworked (male) company employee in their narratives of nation. Participants suggested that such hard work is a national virtue, one of the characteristics which facilitated Japan's rapid economic development; however, participants were also critical of the national propensity to work 'too hard,' to the detriment of family and community. Ms. Higuchi, a woman who runs a small family business with her mother-in-law, noted,

In Japan . . . it's good if you work hard. . . . I think this, and my husband thinks the same, that it's good for men to work. But they don't have much

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<sup>107</sup> *Chonmage* is a top-knot hairstyle formerly worn by *samurai*, among others; and *tatami* is Japanese grass mat flooring.

time when they come home, time to see their children and to spend in their home life. . . . There are a lot of kids who don't know where their fathers are. It's 'What does Dad do? Where does Dad go?' That kind of thing. They can't talk to their fathers much. So these are lonely/dreary times (*sabishii jidai*), when children's hearts aren't nurtured.

Ms. Higuchi suggested that this national (male) propensity toward overwork may account, in part, for the rise in school violence, the rise in violence committed by children against family members, and the decline in public morals more generally. Curiously, however, although Ms. Higuchi revealed that she has devoted approximately nine hours a day for the last twenty years to the family business, as well as maintaining a sizeable field of vegetables for family consumption and working as a day labourer on her brother's farm, she insisted that she has 'never worked.' It is possible her claim to have never worked reflects a desire to be, or to be perceived as, an affluent stay-at-home wife who enjoys the so-called '*san-shoku-hirune-tsuki*' (the 'three meals a day and an afternoon nap' lifestyle). Such a claim might also be seen as a strategy to distance herself from the kind of overwork she associates with social decline. However, what Ms. Higuchi's narrative clearly reveals is that while men's labour is understood as the 'work,' 'hard work' or even 'overwork' central to notions of Japanese national identity, women's labour, whether income-generating or not, is largely excluded from images of national working life.

It is primarily women, however, who are associated with another national characteristic noted by participants, patience or endurance (*gaman*). Ms. Sasaki, a prominent young business owner, suggested early in our conversation that, 'It is a Japanese trait that people just endure, not saying what they really want to say.' While the gendering of this national trait is not clear from this statement, later in our discussion she remarked, 'I think men, in general, have decision-making ability; they can make responsible decisions faster. On the other hand women, in general, don't have this ability, but they can endure (*gaman suru koto*) difficult things better instead. So society is structured so that men have the decision-making role and women endure difficult things continuously.' Such comments suggest that the perceived national trait of endurance or

patience is, at least implicitly, gendered in the feminine. It seems to be associated, in particular, with the image of the long-suffering Japanese wife and mother, pervasive in mass mediated texts, perhaps most famously in the popular television series *Oshin*.<sup>108</sup> Participants note that the female embodiment of this national trait is a source of pride for many women. As Ms. Sasaki explained, women who can endure are ‘secretly very proud of themselves.’ However, women’s apparent pride in their ability to endure should not obscure the effects of such discourses. Discourses of women’s endurance serve to naturalise the patriarchal social relations Ms. Sasaki described and seemingly accepted. So even as female participants used the notion of endurance to claim a place for themselves in visions of national identity, their vision reflected a social order that places them in a subordinate position. In this way, such claims both mirror and challenge widely circulating discourses of national identity that construct women as passive and men as active in the national imagined community.

Women are not rendered invisible in participants’ discussions of national archetypes and the national character, as is the case with such discussions in Australia. Rather, Japanese participants called on both masculine and feminine archetypes and character traits in their discussions of Japaneseness; the gendering of national identity was context dependent. Feminine imagery, including the *kimono* and endurance or patience, were most often evoked when participants discussed Japanese ‘traditions.’ Masculine images such as the salaryman, the artisan, hard work and overwork, surfaced most often when participants discussed Japanese industry (including craftsmanship) and economic development. The masculine archetype of the *samurai* occupied a temporally anomalous position in discourses of national identity. Participants associated the *samurai* with sword-making, and, implicitly, with Japanese industry, a source of pride in discussions of contemporary Japan; however, the *samurai* is also firmly located in the past. Participants did not explicitly link the *samurai* with Japan’s martial history; and the fact that he was

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<sup>108</sup> *Oshin* was a 1983 NHK mini-drama series that set records for viewership in Japan. The title character was a poor farm girl who was sold into servitude and endured a life of hardship and cruelty; however, she persevered and eventually became a successful business owner. The mini-drama (with daily 15-minute episodes) was eventually telecast to more than 50 countries worldwide.

often treated as a figure of fun may suggest that participants wished to distance themselves from Japan's military past.

It may also be a reflection of the politics of cross-national research. Participants' comments were undoubtedly shaped by their perceptions of me as a foreign researcher, specifically as a citizen of two countries with whom their nation fought in World War II. That participants did not express pride in the *samurai* as a martial figure does not necessarily mean they did not feel such pride. Rather, their silences may indicate an awareness of the political sensitivity of such issues in Japan's international relations.<sup>109</sup>

### *Social relations and social ethics*

Participants' discussions of Japanese national identity also centred on the kinds of social relations and social ethics thought to characterise the national community. Most of these modes of social organisation and the principles which underpin them were not explicitly gendered in participants' narratives. Participants suggested, for example, that Japanese society is characterised by a disparity between *honne* and *tatemae* (true feelings and professed feelings), a tension between *omote* and *ura* (the surface/appearance and the inside/reality), and an emphasis on *haji* (shame), all of which apply equally to both men and women. The original Japanese terminology is significant here, for all of these expressions are set phrases, bordering on clichés, appearing in classic Japanese social scientific texts such as Doi Takeo's (1971) *Amai no koozoo* (The Anatomy of Dependence), Ruth Benedict's (1946) *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (widely read in translation in Japan), and Nakane Chie's (1967) *Tate shakai no ningen kankei* (Human Relations in Vertical Society). Participants' frequent use of these terms suggests that such authorised discourses of Japaneseness to some extent provide terms of reference for folk discourses of national identity.

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<sup>109</sup> The continuing sensitivity about the events of World War II was highlighted in August, 2001 when Prime Minister Koizumi visited Yasukuni Shrine, a shrine commemorating Japan's war dead, including 14 executed war criminals. The visit attracted harsh criticism from the governments of China, and North and South Korea, as well as from Chinese and Korean residents in Japan.

Folk discourses of Japanese national identity are at least implicitly gendered. With the exception of high school students, male and female participants in all social locations suggested that Japanese society is strongly characterised by patriarchal social relations, both in the domestic and public arenas. An awareness of male dominance was revealed by participants as they suggested that in Japan, 'men are on top' [male business owner], 'men tell women what to do' [male public servant], or 'there is no equality of the sexes' [female public servant]. A group of female business owners, including two younger women, Ms. Kuroda and Ms. Sasaki, and an older woman, Ms. Tanaka, spoke at some length about their own experiences of male dominance in the home.

Ms. Kuroda: In our family . . . if we ate fish, Father had the belly part and the children ate the tail.

Ms. Tanaka: In our family . . . men eat the upper [better] part and women eat the lower part.

Ms. Sasaki: I take the best part right away! [laughing]

Ms. Kuroda: In our family, I still serve my father/husband the biggest fish.

Ms. Tanaka: Or the part near the head. We still do the same.

Interviewer: It sounds like the relationship between men and women is really changing.

Ms. Tanaka: Yes, it has changed. My mother used to be preparing breakfast when we woke up. And there used to be no hot water system, you know. So when my father wanted to wash his face, she made warm water in a washbowl and stood behind him holding a towel. While he was wiping his face, she put breakfast on the table . . . [and] when he had to leave, there were polished shoes at the door for him.

Ms. Sasaki: At my friend's house, her husband goes to work very early in the morning, and she never wakes up early. So her husband wakes up alone, and prepares and eats his breakfast alone, and goes to work.

Ms. Tanaka: Impossible!

Ms. Sasaki: She doesn't have a job, but she says she would get sleepy during the day if she woke up that early.

Ms. Tanaka: But she could have a nap during the day.

In this exchange the participants revealed not only the nature of domestic patriarchy in the past, but women's varied responses to patriarchal domestic arrangements in the present. While one young woman, Ms. Sasaki, actively resisted such male dominance ('I always take the best part right away!'), her young colleague complied with it, and her older colleague seemed to actively support it by suggesting that it is a wife's duty to serve her husband.

Other participants' comments suggested that the kind of domestic patriarchy described by the business owners above is perceived to be a key aspect of Japanese social relations. Many focus group participants' comments centred on an advertisement in which a man first asks his wife to clean the toilet, but then cleans it himself with the disposable toilet cleaning cloth advertised:

I thought [that ad] was un-Japanese. It showed a husband and wife, and the husband did the housework, so it wasn't very Japanese [Mr. Hata, young public servant];

[That ad] was un-Japanese, because men of our age group don't clean the toilet. . . . They'll tell you if the toilet isn't clean, but they don't clean it themselves [Ms. Iwabuchi, older farmer];

At the beginning it was Japanesey, because the actor called to his wife to tell her the toilet wasn't clean. If it had ended there, it would have been Japanesey. But . . . he cleaned it himself [Ms. Hamabata, retiree].

Participants in a variety of social locations also suggested that sexism in the workplace is a key feature of Japanese society. Many male participants' comments focused on an advertisement featuring a young female office worker and her male boss. When her boss orders her in an off-handed way to take out the trash, she imagines putting him in the trash can; but she cheerfully complies with his request nonetheless. As several male participants observed:

[That ad] reflects Japanese society, where female staff are used by their bosses just to take out the trash. . . . They use female staff as if they can only take charge of trivial routines, such as making tea. . . . That is the Japanese way [Mr. Takahashi, teacher];



[That ad showed] the relations between a female office worker and her [male] boss. . . . It showed the nature of offices in Japan. I thought it was Japanese, considering the role of female office workers [Mr. Miyake, employee];

For people in our generation, there is nothing wrong with that boss asking young workers, especially young female workers, to do what they want them to do, such as making tea. So I thought [that ad] was good, as it seemed Japanese to someone like me [Mr. Mori, retiree].

While male participants tended to paint a rather static picture of workplace gender relations, female participants suggested that the situation is changing, although in complex ways. Young female public servants, for example, suggested that while women are winning greater equality in their workplaces, they are still largely relegated to what is perceived as 'women's work,' clerical support and service positions. As Ms. Osada, a council worker noted, 'I think Japan is a sexist country. But I guess men and women are going to have equal rights; it will just take many years.' Ms. Hamabata and Ms. Sawachi, older teachers who are active in the Japanese feminist movement, argued that in Japan, Confucianism is the primary source of women's oppression, as it gives men the power to define the value of women's labour. However, another teacher, Ms. Ueno, suggested that women themselves must bear some of the responsibility for their own subordinate positions in the workplace. Ms. Ueno is a senior teacher who is unmarried and in her late fifties. Few other women in the prefecture have reached her rank in the school system. She explained that although female teachers want to receive the same salaries as their male colleagues, some are unwilling to take on the same responsibilities. While she suggested that it is difficult for women to hold jobs when they also have family commitments, she disapproved of women who use their families as an excuse to shirk their work responsibilities.

While participants disagreed as to the origins and direction of patriarchy in Japan, what is clear from the above examples is that participants, both male and female, young and old, saw patriarchy as an enduring feature of Japanese social relations, and, by extension, a key feature of Japanese national identity. The business women quoted above

neatly articulated this link between patriarchy and national identity, providing insight into the ideological function of such narratives of nation:

- Ms. Sasaki: I still don't think that men and women are equal/the same (*issho*).
- Ms. Kuroda: Neither do I.
- Ms. Sasaki: I believe that men and women are different, so we can never be equal. We may have equal rights, but women's physical strength could never be the same as men's. And women menstruate and bear children, so we could never be the same.
- Ms. Tanaka: Even though people are taught in school that men and women are equal, when they become working members of society, [they find] it is still a male dominated world. Japan is still a man's society (*otoko shakai*), you know.
- Ms. Kuroda: But women are allowed to say a lot. Maybe.
- Ms. Tanaka: In the long history of Japan, women have always been below men, following men. Even though some women were more talented than men, they have been like that throughout our long history. . . . So even if a lot of women . . . became independent, women would not be allowed to demonstrate their full abilities and reach high status positions, like politicians, like female ministers of state in America. Because housework and child care are still considered women's work, so it's difficult for women to leave that work to get a position equal to men's. Because it is not socially acceptable, or the society is not ready yet.
- Ms. Sasaki: It is Japanese identity.
- Ms. Tanaka: Yes, it is.

This exchange highlights the naturalisation of women's subordination via interrelated notions of biology, patriarchy and national identity. The subordination of women is perceived to be inevitable because patriarchy is said to be a feature of Japanese national identity; and patriarchy is perceived to be inevitable due to the biological differences between the sexes. In other words, this seemingly inextricable link between patriarchy and national identity is used by participants to both explain and to legitimate, or at least resign themselves to, the subordination of women in Japan. At the same time,

however, these women contest the inevitability of gender inequality. They suggest that the long-standing inequalities they describe are social constructs, not simply the result of 'natural' differences between women and men. They talk about what society currently 'allows,' what society currently 'accepts;' and they raise the possibility of social change when they note that Japanese society is simply 'not ready *yet*' for such changes.

### *Everyday practice*

In addition to generalised notions of national archetypes, the national character and social relations, Japanese participants' narratives of nation centred on specific everyday practices including the work, leisure and 'customs' said to be typical throughout the national community. As with the dimensions of national identity already discussed, participants' discussions of everyday practice reveal a subtle gendering of the national imagined community.

As noted above, Japanese participants cited 'hard work' and 'overwork' as features of Japanese identity; furthermore, they strongly associated 'work' with the world of the salaryman, while women's labour, both paid and unpaid, was largely excluded from discussions of national working life. Even while Japanese working practice was associated with the largely male domain of the office, however, many participants mentioned a recent increase in the number of working women. Although male participants rarely commented on the impact of these changing labour patterns, female participants interpreted them in a variety of ways.

While a group of female public servants associated increased participation of women in the workforce with a general improvement in women's social position, younger and older female farmers made the more specific observation that an increase of women in paid labour is forcing more equitable division of domestic labour. Likewise, Ms. Osada, a long-serving council employee who remains unmarried in her mid-thirties contrary to her parents' wishes, noted the positive impact of these changing labour patterns. However, she acknowledged that as more women enter the workforce and stay in their jobs longer, many companies become 'confused' (*tomadotteru*).

The companies and organisations where these women continue to work for a long time are probably confused now . . . and wondering what to do. It used to be that women didn't work for long, because they quit when they got married. So there were always young female employees. There was a cycle that when the young female staff were hired, there were always other staff who quit to get married. But these days, women continue to work, and older female staff remain employed in the companies. . . . So they don't know how they should treat those female staff.

While Ms. Osada did not suggest that these changing labour trends will have any dire or wide-spread social consequences, she demonstrated an awareness that her labour, and the labour of women like her, is viewed by those around her as both unusual and problematic. Such perceptions may have coloured her self-critical closing comments, 'I might have different ideas from others. . . . I am different. A bit weird.'

Another participant, Ms. Ueno, the senior teacher quoted earlier, suggested that the increasing number of married women in the workforce has broader social implications. She associated the increased entry of wives and mothers into the workforce with increased materialism and general moral decline:

Morals have deteriorated. It's probably rooted in rapid economic development (*koodo-seichoo*). Some people profited with the growth of Japan's economy, which allowed people to buy cars and houses, and that led to the nuclear family. When the nuclear family buys a house and pays a mortgage, housewives have to work outside the home, which restricts communication within the family. Children understand the need for extra money to pay the mortgage, but they don't communicate well, which can cause a gap between parents and children. Parents just give children money, but morals aren't taught in the family. So, I think the twenty-first century could bring insecure and dark times.

Ms Ueno's comments reveal a perception that the domestic labour of wives and mothers is natural and proper and helps maintain social and moral order, while their paid labour is socially problematic. However, it is worth noting that she herself has followed a rather non-traditional life path, remaining unmarried, pursuing her career and reaching a rank usually occupied only by men. There is a tension, therefore, between her account of gendered national identity and her own life experiences.

Just as working practices inform Japanese participants' notions of national identity, so leisure practices also figure in their narratives of nation. Participants in all social locations associated the *onsen* (hot spring spa) with Japaneseness. 'The Japanese love the *onsen*.' [Mr. Sen, older public servant]; 'The *onsen* is unique to Japan' [Ms. Mita, employee]; 'The *onsen* is the king of leisure' [Mr. Ando, business owner]. Visiting the *onsen* is a popular leisure pursuit for men, women and families, and therefore cannot be considered a gendered leisure practice. However, the other leisure practices participants associated with national identity, golf and drinking (alcohol), are strongly gendered in the masculine.

While, to some extent, both men and women play golf and drink alcohol in Japan, in participants' accounts of national identity, these leisure practices were strongly associated with the world of the salaryman. Male teachers, for instance, discussed the 'Japanese salaryman style of golf,' and a male public servant estimated that eighty percent of the young male office workers around him play golf [Mr. Matsui]. A group of male employees more explicitly linked golf and drinking with the salaryman when they explained that for (male) Japanese company employees, after-hours social activities such as golf and drinking parties are considered part of one's obligation to one's colleagues: 'Japanese people [men] working for companies usually can't refuse to go to a social gathering. The relationship with other members of the organisation goes beyond office hours. . . . In most cases, turning them down could have a negative effect on your job' [Mr. Miyake].

When most Japanese participants cited drinking as a feature of national identity, therefore, they referred to work-related (semi-)obligatory drinking among mainly male company employees. Participants' reactions to two similar advertisements confirmed that women are largely excluded from this national leisure practice. In one advertisement, a man practises golf alone and then drinks a beer; in the other, a woman enjoys an *onsen* bath alone and then drinks a beer. In response to the first advertisement, participants noted, 'What he is doing is Japanese, working hard, sweating and drinking' [Mr. Tsuya, young public servant]; he is 'a typical Japanese middle-aged man' [Mr. Takenaka,

employee]; he is 'a typical Japanese' [Ms. Sasaki, business owner]. In response to the second advertisement, however, participants noted, 'No Japanese woman would drink beer alone like that' [Ms. Tanaka, older business owner]; or, 'It was not realistic that a woman stayed alone at a hotel drinking beer' [Mr. Miyake, employee]. A group of older female farmers reacted even more strongly:

- Ms. Aiba: In the olden days, women didn't drink beer like that.
- Ms. Iwabuchi: [In that ad] the woman drank beer. But when we were young we didn't do that.
- Ms. Aiba: Women in my age group don't drink.
- Ms. Iwabuchi: There's nothing wrong with it for young people.
- Ms. Aiba: But when we watch images like that, it doesn't seem natural to us. We think, 'Oh dear, she is drinking beer!'

Not all female participants accepted their exclusion from this national leisure practice, however. In response to her colleague's comment, above, that 'No Japanese woman would drink beer alone like that,' Ms. Tanaka, another older female business owner, said, 'I thought the opposite. I think . . . this commercial showing a woman travelling alone and looking liberated reflects Japanese society now.' Likewise, a group of teachers responded positively to the advertised image of a woman drinking:

- Ms. Kondo: When I saw . . . the ad with the girl drinking beer I thought—well, the usual Japanesey image is an old man [tossing back a beer]. [Everyone laughs and agrees.] But instead, this isn't really Japanesey; it's just realistic (*futsu no joken*).
- Ms. Wada: The age has changed to where women drink beer.
- Ms. Matsumoto: There are quite a few women in the beer gardens.
- Ms. Wada: Recent beer ads use [actresses] Suzuki Kyoka and Esumi Makiki. Ads for strong beer. It's becoming an age when women drink beer.
- Ms. Hayashi: When I first saw the ad where the woman is drinking beer, I thought, 'Well done!' Before this, only men

usually appeared in this kind of ad, drinking and relaxing in those kind of places.

In this exchange, the female participants contested their previous exclusion from the 'Japanesey' image of beer drinking, and celebrated their inclusion in more recent representations of this national leisure practice.

The above exchange also reveals tensions between lived experiences and widely circulating constructions of Japaneseness. As Ms. Kondo commented, the advertisement featuring a woman drinking beer, 'isn't Japanesey; it's just realistic.' In other words, although alcohol consumption by women is a fact of life in contemporary Japan, it does not feature in discourses of Japanese national identity, which construct women as 'traditional,' demure and domestic, the antithesis of a young woman drinking alone in a hotel lounge.

Participants' narratives of nation centred on one final dimension of everyday practice which I will call 'custom.' 'Custom' (what participants usually call *shuukan* or *fuushuu*) is taken here to refer to long-standing ritual social practice perceived to be common throughout the nation.<sup>110</sup> Participants frequently spoke of customs presumed to be unique to Japan, including removing shoes when entering buildings, sitting *seiza* (sitting upright on one's knees), and engaging in seasonal gift-giving. While these first two customs are not particularly gendered,<sup>111</sup> seasonal gift-giving carries both strong feminine and strong masculine associations.

Participants in all social locations associated *o-chuugen* (mid-year gift-giving) and *o-seibo* (year-end gift-giving) with Japaneseness. As participants noted: 'The custom of gift exchange is Japanesey. When the season comes, we send *o-chuugen* and *o-seibo*' [Mr. Imai, older public servant]; '[*O-chuugen* is] a custom unique to Japan, and people wouldn't do it overseas' [Ms. Mita, employee]; 'Our custom of giving gifts at *o-bon* [a

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<sup>110</sup> I did not discuss such 'customs' in the Australian context, for while certain practices (such as beer-drinking or attending sporting events) could be considered 'long-standing ritual social practice,' they are less compulsory than the Japanese practices described above.

<sup>111</sup> While it is more common for women to sit *seiza*, men also adopt this posture in certain social contexts.

mid-August festival] and the end of the year cannot be seen overseas. . . . It's our unique custom' [Ms. Hamabata, retiree].

Such seasonal gift-giving had strong feminine associations for many participants, partly because it belongs to the imagined realm of 'tradition,' the realm of gentility, refinement and *kimono*-clad women. As Mr. Tsuya, a young public servant observed, '*O-chuugen* ads usually show women dressed nicely in *kimono* to take gifts to people's houses.' Seasonal gift-giving was also associated with the feminine, however, because it is primarily a practice aimed at maintaining relationships between families, a practice commonly perceived to be the responsibility of women. As Ms. Sawachi, a retiree, noted, 'Gift-giving would be a custom unique to Japan . . . especially because it is for the relationship between different families/households (*ie*). I believe people overseas exchange gifts between individuals, but we do it between families/households, or between bosses and subordinates.' She also noted that it is most common to give food as seasonal gifts, and added that 'Things related to food [are] still a woman's job.'

As the above comments indicate, however, seasonal gift-giving takes place both between families and between employees and their bosses. This accounts, in part, for the strong masculine associations it held for some participants. Mr. Hosokawa, a young farmer, suggested that while seasonal gift-giving is on the decline among farming families, it is an important social obligation for the salaryman:

I think people in the salaryman's world give good gifts to their bosses to make a better impression. I guess it's quite common to send good gifts to your boss to get a promotion. But because I'm not part of that world, I'm not sure what's really happening inside it. People like me who are self-employed don't do this very much. And my parents also send gifts to relatively few people. I can't explain it very well, but I think this custom is related to the salaryman's world.

Mr. Hosokawa's comments also hint at the kind of objections which other participants raised regarding seasonal gift-giving. A broad cross-section of participants noted that the custom is 'unnecessary,' 'uneconomical' or 'a waste of time and money.' Such objections highlight the tensions between 'tradition' and change, group orientation and



individualism, the masculine and the feminine which arise in the practise of such long-standing customs.

In sum, Japanese participants suggested that everyday practices including work and leisure practices and ‘customs,’ are important aspects of national identity. In folk discourses of national identity, such practices are gendered, although they are gendered in more subtle ways than similar discourses in Australia. While Australian discussions of everyday practice largely exclude women (and ‘non-whites’) and figure the nation as (‘white’ and) masculine, Japanese discussions of everyday practice construct the nation as both masculine and feminine. In most of the folk accounts of national identity, women are constructed as domestic, passive and ‘traditional,’ while men are constructed as public, active and progressive. However some (mainly female) participants rejected such gender binaries and constructed what they considered more ‘realistic’ images of gendered national identity in contemporary Japan.

### *Material and symbolic culture*

The most unequivocal gendering of discourses of Japanese national identity is found in participants’ comments on the links between Japaneseness and national material and symbolic culture. The remarks of Mr. Fujita, a high school student, neatly capture a trend common among most participants. When asked what he thinks of when someone says ‘Japaneseness,’ he answered, ‘*Kimono*, things that have been around since olden days.’ These ‘things,’ the manufactured or modified objects customarily used or consumed by the national community, were at the centre of many participants’ narratives of nation; and among these objects, those with feminine and/or domestic associations were most often central to notions of Japaneseness.

As discussed earlier, the *kimono* emerged as a key symbol of Japaneseness in most participants’ discussions of national identity, and was strongly associated with the past, with ‘tradition’ and with femininity. What emerged from participants’ discussions of material culture was that other objects carry similar associations. Most of the material objects participants associated with Japaneseness were drawn from the arenas of home-

making and childcare: the Japanese cooking knife, Japanese food (such as rice, *miso*, seaweed and noodles), green tea, Japanese cushions and grass mats, and children's toys such as the Japanese spinning top and kite.<sup>112</sup> Other frequently mentioned objects were also drawn from largely feminine pursuits and practices: the tea ceremony, the *koto* and *koto* music, and *hina* dolls.<sup>113</sup> Only a small number of objects associated with Japaneseness, including the sword and the *shakuhachi* (bamboo flute), were drawn from largely masculine pursuits.

A number of participants suggested that images drawn from 'traditional' material culture, images of 'things that have been around since olden days,' make contemporary Japanese feel 'relaxed,' 'at ease' or 'peaceful' (*hotto suru, anshin suru*). The comments of Mr. Ando, the business owner quoted earlier, suggest that this gendered world of material 'tradition' is the focus of nostalgia and escapist desire. He noted that the clichéd images of Japaneseness include notable people, places, practices and material objects from the nation's past; but, he added, 'There were those things in history, and some of them are still in Japan, but Japan today is not like that. . . . It is different from the reality. [But] there is a wish that things could be that way . . . with your wife dressed in *kimono*, waiting for you to come home, or a beautiful water scene, or a flying kite, or a spinning top.' In Mr. Ando's vision of Japan as it could be, and perhaps *should* be, gender is employed as a category through which a comforting sense of stability and security is maintained.

Not all participants uncritically accepted such widely circulating discourses of nation, however. Some participants challenged the existence of a unique and homogeneous Japanese material and symbolic culture. As Ms. Hara, a young public servant, argued, for example, 'There isn't a unique culture in Japan anyway. It was

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<sup>112</sup> Each of these objects (*deba-boochoo, o-kome, miso, wakame, udon/soba, ocha/Nihon-cha, zabuton, tatami, koma* and *tako*, respectively) appeared at least briefly in the advertisements shown to focus groups. However interviewees who were not shown the advertisements also mentioned a number of these objects in their discussions of Japaneseness.

<sup>113</sup> The *koto* is a Japanese harp. *Hina* dolls (*hina-ningyoo*) are drawn from the March 3<sup>rd</sup> Doll's Festival (*Hina Matsuri*), celebrated to pray for the happiness of daughters.

originally introduced from overseas in the olden days . . . from China. . . . The culture in Japan just isn't as unique as people overseas imagine. [For example,] there are only a few people who can get dressed in *kimono* by themselves.' In a similarly reflexive move, Ms. Honda, the well-travelled teacher quoted in the Introduction to this thesis, dissects the 'fantasy' of Japanese cultural homogeneity. 'It is a fantasy that [people] believe there is only one language and only one culture in their world. . . . I'm a little different from other Japanese, because I don't have that fantasy that Japan is a monoracial nation.'

Such fractures in the veneer of Japanese cultural homogeneity frequently emerge in participants' discussions of the diverse dialects of Japanese language. One teacher observed, for example, that there are 'foreign languages even within the Japanese language' [Mr. Oomori]; one young farmer noted his surprise at not being able to understand the language spoken by farmers from different regions of Japan [Mr. Iwabuchi Masao]; and one older farmer remarked that, 'Young people speak a language we can't understand' [Mr. Iwai].

That language nonetheless serves as a powerful marker of national identity is clear in participants' reactions to advertisements that mix images of 'traditional' Japanese culture with non-Japanese linguistic forms. As one high school boy observed,

One ad that sells a Japanese thing but isn't a Japanesey ad is the *Suzuran An* [sweet bean jam] ad. . . . When you hear the word '*an*,' it seems traditional, but when you actually see that commercial, it isn't really Japanesey. . . . The image of the *an* doesn't go with English. It actually clashes with it [Mr. Fujita].

Similarly, a teacher commented on another advertisement which features a woman in *kimono* with the product name written in English on the screen: 'Because it was written in English it would be the opposite (non-Japanesey), even though the images are Japanesey' [Mr. Oomori]. Likewise, a young farmer noted that she initially thought an advertisement featuring a *samurai* was quite Japanese, 'But because there was English writing in the background, I had to reconsider' [Ms. Mitsui].<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Such comments also highlight the intersection between language and ethnicity, which is covered in more depth in this chapter's discussion of ethnicity.

Participants also linked supposedly unique features of Japanese language to notions of national identity. Such commonly identified features included Japanese honorific language, Japanese plays on words (*goro awase* or *dajare*), the convention of vertical writing, and the three distinctive character systems (*hiragana*, *katakana* and *kanji*) used in Japanese. What is interesting in terms of a discussion of the gendering of national identity, however, is that although participants demonstrated an awareness of such distinctive features of Japanese language, no participant mentioned another feature of the national tongue often remarked upon by foreign observers: the difference between male and female language. This conspicuous silence indicates that gendered linguistic practices are a taken-for-granted part of participants' everyday experiences, something so natural, and perhaps even seemingly universal, that it is not explicitly included in folk discourses of national identity.

Finally, in discussions of Japanese material and symbolic culture, participants occasionally mentioned the aesthetic forms, practices, and principles thought to be distinctive to the nation. Some of these artistic pursuits are gendered, such as tea ceremony, discussed above. Others, such as the principle of *wabi-sabi* (simplicity and elegance), are not. Some participants also suggested that such aesthetic forms, and Japanese symbolic and material culture more generally, are tools of nationalism. A group of female teachers, for instance, suggested that government and educational elites use 'traditional' arts and symbols like the national flag and the national anthem, to promote the 'love' of country:

Ms. Noguchi: School principals and vice principals and members of the board of education think it's internationalisation to raise the *Hinomaru* [the national flag] and sing 'Kimigayo' [the national anthem]. We teachers and the children have no choice. Most of the people in Japan have to obey. They say it's internationalisation.

Interviewer: Really?

Ms. Noguchi: Yes. And someone like [Prime Minister] Hashimoto Ryutaro is also one of them.

Ms. Wada: It's like *kendo*. He loves traditional things.

Ms. Hayashi: He wants to protect Japanese traditions such as *kabuki*, *shakuhachi* music, and 'Kimigayo.' So their idea is that 'Kimigayo' is a tradition we should not break. That's why they want us to sing it. I think protecting our traditions is necessary as well as exchanging traditional culture with other countries. But in our opinion, 'Kimigayo' is not our tradition.

Ms. Wada: They say, 'Know your country before knowing other countries.' The government says if you don't love your own country, including the *Hinomaru* and 'Kimigayo,' you won't be able to love other countries.<sup>115</sup>

In other words, while elites promote 'traditional' arts and symbols as an integral part of 'internationalisation,' in effect, these things serve to promote a nationalistic 'love' of country. The comments of Ms. Ueno, one of the educational elite to whom these teachers refer, seem to bear out this observation. She noted, 'I think everybody accepts the national flag and the national anthem as a way of loving their country.'

In sum, in Japanese focus groups and interviews, the national material and symbolic culture emerges as a key dimension of national identity. The bulk of material artefacts associated with Japaneseness are drawn from the realm of largely feminine, and largely 'traditional,' pursuits, with this gendering of the national material culture serving to reinforce a long-standing gender binary which figures women as 'traditional' and backward-looking and men as progressive and future-oriented. Furthermore, the conspicuous absence of any discussion of gendered linguistic practices suggests that such gendered national practices have come to be seen as so natural and commonsensical that they are not considered unique or distinctive features of national identity. Finally, while some discussions of national aesthetic forms and principles reveal gendered associations, such artistic forms seem to serve another ideological function, as a rallying point for nationalism.

Interestingly, however, folk accounts of Japanese material and symbolic culture are the site of strong contestations. Teachers, in particular, elaborated on the ways

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<sup>115</sup> For a number of years, the Japanese national teachers' union has protested the use of the national flag and national anthem at school ceremonies, arguing that these symbols are strongly linked to Japan's twentieth-century militarism.

national cultural symbols are employed by the state to foster nationalism. Specifically, these participants viewed the national anthem, the national flag and the notion of 'monoracialism' as ideological tools used by elites to cultivate patriotism in 'ordinary' Japanese. The very existence of such critiques suggests, however, that any such state ideologies are not perfectly hegemonic.

### *The environment*

Japanese participants' discourses of national identity were firmly grounded in images of the national physical environment. In participants' narratives of nation, the physical environment served as an affective symbol, a marker of identity boundaries, and a force presumed to shape the national character.

A broad cross-section of participants, for instance, suggested that natural features such as cherry blossoms and Mt. Fuji are key symbols of the nation. A young male public servant suggested, for example, that 'Both young and old people would consider Japanese music and cherry blossoms and Mt. Fuji Japanesey' [Mr. Matsui]. Similarly a group of older farmers noted:

- Ms. Uchida: When the cherry blossoms are in full bloom, we think of *hanami* [flower-viewing parties]. When we watch the cherry blossoms on TV, it appeals to us. We think, 'The cherry blossoms have opened!'
- Ms. Iwabuchi: We've seen these images since we were young children.
- Ms. Aiba: We've felt this same way since we were little.
- Ms. Uchida: We feel this kind of thing is Japanese because we watched our parents feeling the same way. When they saw cherry blossoms, they said, 'Oh, the cherry blossoms have opened!'

In this exchange, notions of space, time and domesticity intersect, for participants imagine a national space unchanged by the flow of history, a space to which they are connected through family 'traditions.' As this exchange suggests, both natural space and domestic space serve as affective symbols of national belonging: natural space for its

links to an imagined primordial past; and domestic space for its links to 'tradition.'

While domestic space is gendered in the feminine, as argued earlier, it would be overly simplistic to argue that in Japanese narratives of nation the national space is discursively feminine. As the comments of the farmers above demonstrate, the links between gender, space and nation in folk discourses of national identity are only implicit and relatively weak. Participants draw stronger and more explicit links, however, between the physical environment, nation and ethnicity, to which I will devote the next section of this chapter.

### Ethnicised Discourses of Japanese National Identity

'Race' and ethnicity were prominent themes in Japanese folk discourses of national identity. Participants constructed 'the Japanese' in three ways: as a territorial category (the people belonging to and in the national space); as an ethnic category (people who share certain long-standing cultural traits); and as a 'racial' category (people who share certain genetically inherited traits). Participants used two terms, *jinshu* and *minzoku*, to explicitly discuss the biological and cultural traits presumed to be unique to the Japanese. *Jinshu*, usually translated 'race,' is comprised of the character for 'person' and the character for 'kind,' 'type' or 'species.' *Minzoku*, variously translated as 'race,' 'people,' 'nation' or 'ethnic group,' consists of the character for 'people' or 'nation' and the character meaning 'family' or 'tribe.' However, in contemporary usage, the sense of 'race' is far from explicit in the terms *Nihonjin* (Japanese person/people), *minzoku* and even *jinshu*; rather, there is a constant conceptual slippage between notions of 'nation,' 'ethnicity' and 'race.'<sup>116</sup>

In analysing Japanese transcript data, therefore, it is not always easy to determine whether discourses of national identity constitute ethnicised discourses. Participants'

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<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, in discussing '*jinshu*' and '*minzoku*,' Morris-Suzuki (1998: 87), drawing on Wallerstein, notes, 'All efforts at fixing these Japanese terms to stable English translations, indeed, is frustrated not just by the slipperiness of the Japanese words themselves, but also by the fact that the English words "race," "nation," and "ethnic group" are "used with incredible inconsistency" (Wallerstein 1991b, 77).'

descriptions of the national character, social relations and social ethics, for example, are only sometimes explicitly racialised/ethnicised. For instance, a number of participants, mainly teachers and public servants, drew on the notion of the Japanese as a 'monoracial people' (*tan'itsu minzoku*), a concept used to explain, and to some extent legitimate, the rejection of foreigners. As one older public servant explained, 'We are a monoracial people, so our way of thinking is not open toward foreigners, especially people from South East Asia' [Mr. Sen]. The notion of a monoracial Japan also allowed participants to acknowledge the existence of ethnic Others within the nation, while at the same time denying their difference. As Mr. Hamabata, a retired teacher, noted, 'There used to be native people in Hokkaido called the *Ainu* people, and in Okinawa called the *Ryuukyuu* people, [but] they were assimilated into the Japanese.' The notion of the monoracial nation also provided a focal point for what seemed to be more diffuse anxieties about the social changes associated with globalisation. Mr. Taguchi, a prominent senior public servant who would later rise to the upper echelons of city hall, voiced concern that as an increasing number of 'monoracial Japanese' intermarry with foreigners, monoracial Japan will experience the 'racial problems' typical of the United States and Canada:

We are basically a monoracial people. We have hardly anyone besides monoracial Japanese people. . . . If [even] one percent of our population had international marriages and had children, there would be a racial problem (*jinshu mondai*) which would be worse than in America. . . . Japan is going to face this problem which advanced nations such as America and Canada have already resolved. It is going to be a large issue ethnically, legally and structurally.

Later he added, 'If my daughter wanted to marry a foreigner, I wouldn't say yes.' This remark reveals both an intimate connection between patriarchy and discourses of national identity, and the notion of ethnic Japanese proprietorship over the nation, Mr. Taguchi assumes the right and responsibility to regulate not only his daughter's behaviour, but also the behaviour of foreign Others in the nation.

In other participants' discussions of the national character, social relations and social ethics, there was a blurring between notions of 'racial' phenotypes (usually skin,



hair and eye colour), language and behaviours, making it difficult to determine the degree to which narratives of nation are ethnicised. For instance, a broad cross-section of participants, including teachers, public servants, employees, business owners and retirees, noted that Japanese people feel frightened of, and/or inferior to, foreigners; however, participants explained such feelings in various ways. In a relatively explicit reference to 'racial' phenotypes as the source of discomfort, Mr. Matsui, a public servant, recounted his trepidation the first time he met someone 'tall and blonde.' Likewise, Mr. Ando, a business owner, told how the people of Hirogawa were 'nearly paralysed with shock' the first time a black musician performed at the local concert hall. He explained, 'He was pitch-black black . . . And I think quite a few Hirogawa people had never seen a black man before.'

Other participants suggested that language differences were the main source of their anxieties over interacting with foreigners. As Ms. Takayama, an employee, noted, 'If an English-speaking person spoke to a Japanese, most Japanese people would just avoid them because they can't speak the language.' Likewise, Mr. Kuzume, a business owner argued, 'Talking face to face with foreigners repulses everybody, at least a little. If someone says they don't feel like this, they're not telling the truth.' Still other participants suggested that their discomfiture is the result of foreigners' behaviour. As Mr. Yamazaki, an employee, observed, 'Once I lived on the mainland for a while. I saw some Chinese or Korean people who looked very much like Japanese. But I found they speak their languages very loudly right next to us on the train. We Japanese don't speak that loudly in public places. This is Japaneseness. But they don't care how they annoy others.'

Just as notions of 'race,' language and behaviour overlapped in participants' descriptions of the national character, social relations and social ethics, making it difficult to state conclusively that such discourses are ethnicised, ethnicity was only an implicit part of participants' accounts of the everyday practice of the nation. Clearly, for some participants, customs which were perceived to be particularly central to national identity, such as *o-chuugen* (mid-year gift-giving), are disrupted by the presence of foreigners.

Commenting on an advertisement which features a foreigner receiving *o-chuugen* from a Japanese acquaintance, one older farmer noted, 'I didn't think [the ad] was very Japanese. It was *o-chuugen*, but it was showing a foreigner' [Ms. Uchida]. It is clear that, to the participant, the presence of the foreigner negated the Japaneseness of the custom; what is unclear, however, is whether the foreigner's ethnicity *per se*, or some other characteristic is the perceived source of this negation.

Similarly, in discussions of everyday labour practices, a small number of participants problematised the labour of foreigners; however, the extent to which notions of ethnicity shaped their judgements is unclear. For example, Ms. Ochiai, an employee, suggested that 'some Japanese have lost their jobs' to South East Asians; and Mr. Iwabuchi Masao, a young farmer also quoted above, recalled an incident in which a Filipina entertainer/prostitute in Hirogawa 'made some trouble.' He noted, 'There will be no more Filipinas in Hirogawa; public morals put a stop to it.'<sup>117</sup> While both participants pointed out the foreign origins of these workers, it is not clear whether it is the workers' ethnicity or simply the disruptive nature of their labour which is perceived as problematic.

The ethnicity, or 'race,' of foreign labourers was more clearly problematised by Mr. Taguchi, quoted at some length above regarding 'international' marriages. Interviewed on another day, he reiterated some of his concerns about Japan's impending 'race problem;' however, he focused more specifically on foreign labourers:

The Japanese are pretty much a monoracial people (*tan'itsu minzoku*). But due to the need for low cost labour, Japan has to accept people from overseas whether we like this idea or not. . . . Once the percentage of the non-Japanese population goes up to more than one percent, the social structure of Japan will change. This is going to be a big problem. The race problem (*jinshu mondai*) which a lot of other countries have experienced will happen to Japan.

Likewise, notions of 'race,' or specifically of skin colour, were also fairly explicit in some participants' discussions of the national material and symbolic culture. A group

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<sup>117</sup> Such comments reveal the eroticisation of South East Asian women in Japan.

of female teachers, for instance, suggested that the use of 'white' foreigners in advertisements enhances the image of the product.

- Ms. Noguchi: It would make a better image if foreigners, especially people with white skin were used.
- Ms. Wada: It creates the image of a department store specialising in high-class brands, very fashionable and trendy.
- Ms. Kondo: I just realised that ads present a high-class image when they use foreigners.
- Ms. Wada: Yes, I agree.
- Ms. Matsumoto: People other than Asians.

Ethnicity is used here as a status marker in the realm of Japanese material culture; 'whiteness,' as distinct from Japaneseness and Asian-ness, is perceived to be prestigious, 'fashionable' and 'high-class.'

Notions of ethnicity and material culture also intersected, at least implicitly, in the comments of Mr. Hata, a young public servant, who noted, 'We Japanese people have changed . . . Compared with people in the olden days, we've become less Japanese. But that doesn't mean we've been foreign-ised (*gaikokujin-teki-ka*, a neologism meaning literally 'becoming like a foreigner'). If you could compare us to the pure Japanese people (*junsui na Nihonjin*), we are less Japanese. For example, Japanese children today don't play with kites or tops . . . traditional Japanese toys.' While the term 'pure Japanese' is not an explicitly 'racial' designation, it has overtones of 'blood' or 'breeding.'<sup>118</sup> By implication, then, (ethnically) 'pure Japanese' are those who surround themselves with the objects of 'traditional' material culture. Still, the participant was careful to point out that contemporary Japanese who do not do so, are not necessarily 'foreign-ised.' This indicates that while material culture is associated with ethnicity, material practices are not always understood to determine ethnicity.

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<sup>118</sup> '*Junsui*' consists of the characters for 'pure' (*jun*) and 'essence/elegance' (*sui*). '*Jun*' is also used in compounds meaning 'full-blooded,' 'thoroughbred' or 'purebred' (*junketsu*, *junketsushu*, *junshu*).

Participants in all social locations observed that Japanese, particularly younger Japanese, are becoming more tolerant of foreigners. As Ms. Shimizu, a young farmer, suggested, 'Children these days don't feel anything negative about being friends with foreigners, although people of an older generation are not like this.' However, there is no indication that the perceived differences between 'foreigners' and 'the Japanese' are disappearing. In one illuminating exchange, Ms. Osada, a public servant quoted earlier, was asked whether, given enough time, a 'foreigner' could become Japanese:

Interviewer: Do you think we [foreigners] could become Japanese?

Ms. Osada: I think [you yourself] have a Japanesey way of thinking, a little.

Interviewer: Do you think people from Western countries can become Japanese?

Ms. Osada: I don't think they can. And they don't have to be. They can have their own identities.

Interviewer: And if I lived here from now on and had children, do you think they could become Japanese?

Ms. Osada: I think they would be very nearly Japanese. Their way of thinking.

This exchange reveals a notion of biological 'race' underpinning the participant's understanding of Japaneseness. Those without Japanese ancestry can eventually learn to think like the Japanese, and even become 'very nearly' Japanese; but, seemingly divided by 'race' or ethnicity, the categories 'foreigners' and 'the Japanese' are mutually exclusive.

Finally, ethnicised visions of the nation are most readily apparent in participants' discussions of the national space. For instance, the terms participants used to talk about foreigners reveal complex interpenetrations of ethnicity and space. The most frequently used term for foreigners, *gaijin* (literally 'person from the outside'), was used primarily in references to 'white' foreigners. Similarly, common terms for Americans (*Amerika-jin*) and Westerners (*Seiyō no hito*) effectively excluded 'non-white' Americans and 'non-

white' Westerners. Alongside such seemingly generic but implicitly ethnicised terms for foreigners, participants frequently used the ethnically specific terms *koku-jin* ('black person') and *Ajia-jin* ('Asian person,' a term which usually is not seen to include the Japanese); however participants rarely used the ethnically specific term for 'whites,' *haku-jin* ('white person'). Unless specifically identified as 'black' or 'Asian,' therefore, participants assumed foreigners and foreign spaces to be ethnically 'white,' the essentialised Other to Japan and the Japanese.

Foreigners, in other words, were distinguished both by their perceived 'racial' Otherness and by their spatial Otherness: they were frequently called simply '*mukoo no kata*,' or people from 'over there.' Just as Japanese national space was perceived to be an ethnically Japanese space, foreign spaces were perceived by many participants to be ethnically Other spaces, which are dangerous and frightening. Ms. Ochiai, an employee, went into great detail about her trip to London where she was cheated by 'a bad person, a scary person;' a young farmer noted that 'Overseas places have a scary image. They're different from Japan' [Ms. Shimizu]; and a teacher noted, 'I know it's not good to say this, but when I was in America, I was scared because tall black people surrounded me. I felt like running away' [Mr. Takahashi]. As noted in the previous section, many participants suggested that Japan is 'behind' or even 'below' the West. A public servant observed, for example, 'Even if our technology is very advanced, we still feel inferior, especially to America. People want to be like them [because] although we make great products, we can't beat the Americans as humans' [Ms. Hara]. However, this sense of marginality or inferiority was somewhat mediated by defining foreign spaces as dangerous and frightening, and Japanese spaces as safe and familiar.

Participants suggested, however, that Japanese national space is being transformed by a perceived influx of foreign visitors and workers. Participants including older male public servants, male and female employees, male and female farmers and male business owners, suggested that social order in urban areas, Tokyo in particular, is being undermined by the presence of foreigners.

I am scared because I often hear on the news that foreigners [in Japan] have committed a bank robbery with guns and killed people [Mr. Hosokawa, young farmer];

There are a lot of foreign workers in Shinjuku [Tokyo] including Turks or Brazilians, and some of them commit offences. We see it on TV. But it hasn't happened around here yet [Ms. Aiba, older farmer];

There aren't many people around here from South East Asia, but in the big cities they are employed to do manual labour. And perhaps some Japanese have lost their jobs because of them [Ms. Ochiai, employee].

Such comments suggest anxieties over the loss of ethnic Japanese proprietorship of the nation as non-Japanese become more visible in the nation's larger cities.

While other participants did not voice such concerns about the crime, violence and job losses that foreigners are said to bring to Japan, they did suggest that the presence of the Others can render Japanese national spaces foreign. Both female teachers and male employees discussed the phenomenon of *eki-mae-ryuugaku* (literally 'studying abroad in front of your local train station'). The expression refers to the popular practice of studying a foreign language (usually English), often with foreign teachers, at language schools near train stations. The term reveals the extent to which the presence of foreigners and of foreign languages are imagined to transform national space into foreign space.

This intersection of space and ethnicity, or the ethnic characteristics of both Japanese and Others, emerged even more clearly in participants' discussions of space and climate as elements shaping human behaviour. Ms. Takayama, an employee quoted above, observed, for example that people from Hokkaido 'don't fuss over details,' people in Honshu are 'tight-fisted,' people from Kyushu are 'open-hearted' and people from Tohoku are 'sentimental.' When asked why this is so, she replied,

Probably the climate. Hokkaido and Tohoku are cold places. They have to be patient and stay inside the home for months and months during the cold season. They are not good at expressing themselves, or they don't say things to express their feelings in words. . . . But Kyushu is warmer. There is more sunshine. So they are brighter (*akarui*) and they don't get sentimental.

Likewise, Ms. Higuchi Sachi, the mother-in-law of the business woman quoted earlier, observed differences between Hokkaido and Bangkok, which she had recently visited:

Bangkok was a developing country. I noticed the poverty there. It's probably because it's in a tropical area. People in Hokkaido have to prepare for winter, so we always have to think how to live. But over there it's very warm. . . . They might feel they don't have to work very much. So the country is like that.

Mr. Iwabuchi Masao, a young farmer and the son of the elder Iwabuchis quoted earlier, neatly summed up the role the environment plays in shaping regional or ethnic characteristics:

From a worldwide point of view, people from warm places have a Latin way of thinking (*Laten-kei no kangae kata*), and people from cold places with a lot of snow have a way of thinking like Germans or Danes (*Doitsu-jin toka Denmaaku-jin mitai no kangae kata*).

With such sentiments being relatively common among participants, it is not surprising that many suggested that Japan's geographical position and its topography have profoundly shaped Japanese national identity. A broad cross-section of participants suggested that because Japan is a small nation with few natural resources, the Japanese are hardworking peace-loving people. A business owner observed, for instance, 'We haven't had any choice other than to work hard to improve our quality of life, because we don't have natural resources, because we live in a small nation' [Ms. Tanaka]. Similarly, Mr. Saisho, a retiree, noted, 'Since the olden days, the Japanese people have tried to work in harmony with others. Because there have been so many people living in a small land, they have avoided conflicts as much as they could. This is how we built Japan. This is a national historical characteristic in Japan.'

Another national characteristic described frequently by participants, an inability to accept outsiders, was also attributed, in part, to Japan's geographical location, specifically to its position as an 'island nation' (*'shima-guni'*). In comments typical of those among

public servants, business owners, employees, farmers and retirees, a group of teachers explained why Japanese people have difficulties accepting foreigners:

Mr. Takahashi: It's because we have an island nation mentality (*shima-guni konjoo*).

Mr. Sato: Because we have an island nation mentality. But in places like Europe where they have different nations on one continent, there are different races and languages. People are used to that from the time they're young children. However, when we see people from other countries, we see them as foreigners.

Mr. Takahashi: In this way, we are exclusive. We are not skilled in accepting new things. . . . It could be said that Japanese people have the strongest racial prejudice (*jinshu henken*) in the world.

Later in the interview, these teachers drew on another concept related to Japan's position as an island nation, *sakoku*, Japan's 'closed country' policy, from the early-1600s to the mid-1800s. Participants frequently suggested that during this period of self-imposed national isolation the Japanese developed a strong sense of ethnic exclusivity, a trait said to characterise contemporary Japanese. As one employee explained,

There are still some characteristics which developed when Japan was a closed nation. For example, if people have blue eyes, or well-defined features, or are *Ainu*, they are considered a different people from the Japanese, which they shouldn't be. . . . We even expect them to have different points of view and a different human nature from us, even though we are the same human beings. . . . We have this preconception that only Japanese people can understand Japanese people [Mr. Yamazaki].

Furthermore, the teachers quoted above suggested that it is not only a *sense* of ethnic exclusivity which developed during *sakoku*, but actual 'racial' homogeneity:

Mr. Sato: We're shackled with *sakoku*.

Mr. Takahashi: So we're monoracial.

Mr. Sato: That's because of *sakoku*.



Mr. Takahashi: Yes, *sakoku*.

Mr. Sato: If we didn't have *sakoku*, Japan wouldn't exist.

Notions of space were used to differentiate not only between 'we Japanese' and foreign Others, but also between different Japanese sub-groups. As mentioned earlier, there was a tension in participants' discussions between the ideal of national unity or homogeneity and an awareness of significant regional differences in language and ways of life. Some participants even suggested that Japanese regional identities are, in fact, much stronger than any sense of Japanese national identity. Using Kyushu as an example, Ms. Honda, a teacher, explained:

The culture in Kyushu is strong and obviously each town has its own culture. They can talk about a lot of differences between Fukuoka and Oita or Miyazaki. . . . Each prefecture in Kyushu has their own identity and people will say so loudly. People have a strong identity as an *Ooita-ken-jin* [a person from Oita] that is a lot stronger than their identity as a Japanese. . . . They have a strong consciousness of belonging to the place they live. . . . Their community identity comes first, then their identity as a Japanese comes second.

In addition to such differences at the prefectural level, there was a perceived gulf between urban and rural areas and between Hokkaido and the Japanese 'mainland.'<sup>119</sup> It is perhaps not surprising that participants from rural Hirogawa viewed Japan's cities with some wariness. In comments strikingly similar to those made by rural Australian participants, Japanese participants suggested that cities are impersonal and alienating spaces. As one public servant, a life-long resident of Hirogawa noted, 'Maybe it's the same throughout the world that when people live in a large city they probably don't know their next door neighbour and wouldn't go out with them, and so on. People don't want to be meddled with in a big city. However, in a small town, people are friendly and their group consciousness (*nakama ishiki*) is strong' [Mr. Imai].

Rural areas and rural inhabitants were also seen to lag behind urban centres. As another public servant observed, 'There are differences between Japanese people who live

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<sup>119</sup> Residents of Hokkaido frequently refer to Honshu as '*naichi*,' the 'mainland' or 'homeland.'

in cities and Japanese people who live in the countryside. . . . In the countryside, there are actually old traditions and customs and they are hard to change' [Mr. Matsui]. Such comments reveal an awareness of the marginality of rural Hokkaido relative to urban mainland spaces. In elaborating the differences between Hokkaido and the mainland, Mr. Hashimoto, an employee, suggested that Hokkaido is so different it is like a foreign country, and is treated as such by the central government of Japan which provides Hokkaido (and Okinawa) special development assistance funds akin to foreign aid. 'We are like the foreigners of Japan,' he notes. Likewise, Ms. Takayama, an employee who worked in Tokyo for several years when jobs were hard to find in Hokkaido, explained, 'Hokkaido is far from Tokyo, so the economy of Hokkaido is behind the economy of central Tokyo. So when there is damage to the economy, the impact is greater in country areas like Hokkaido and Kyushu.'

The sense of Hokkaido's marginality within Japan is even clearer in the comments of one young public servant who noted, simply, 'I've heard that people from Hokkaido are looked down on in Honshu' [Ms. Osawa]. However, Ms. Hara, one of her colleagues, was quick to point out that while Hokkaido may be on the periphery, its communities are characterised by more social cohesiveness than other areas. She noted, 'They [mainland urban areas] have some community social life, but not as much as we do, because Hokkaido is in the countryside, and people here think that's important.' Again, in a move similar to that observed among rural Australian participants, these rural Japanese participants acknowledged their geographic and socio-political marginality, and yet they inverted it by suggesting that, compared to cities, rural areas are more 'traditional,' more community-oriented, and in some ways more authentic examples of national values and ways of life.

As argued earlier, it is crucial not only to describe the various dimensions of national identity, but to examine the ways they are used by participants and the ways they mirror, sustain and challenge hierarchies of gender and ethnicity. While the imagined national space is not strongly gendered in the narratives of nation detailed above, it is strongly ethnicised. Participants conceived of 'the Japanese' to be a 'racial' as well as a

spatial category, just as ‘foreigners’ were defined as both ‘racially’ and spatially distinct. In other words, in discourses of national identity ‘the Japanese’ and ‘foreigners’ are constructed as essentialised alters, characterised both by inherited biological and cultural traits, and by their location in specific national spaces. By engaging in such discourses, participants discursively mark out ethnicised boundaries of national identity which obscure the presence of ethnic Others, such as the *Ainu*, the *Burakumin* and Chinese and Korean residents of Japan, within the national space.

Likewise, to contest the marginality and perceived inferiority of rural areas, of Hokkaido and of Japan more generally, participants defined these peripheral spaces as safe, ‘traditional’ and socially cohesive. In so doing, the Japanese ‘myth’ of harmonious homogeneity, described by some participants earlier in the chapter, is reinforced. Furthermore, participants used the notion of Japan’s spatial isolation (and the self-imposed isolation of *sakoku*) to explain a national intolerance of Others. The logic of geographical determinism was used to naturalise, and to some extent legitimate, what participants themselves call ‘racial prejudice.’

At the same time, however, some participants challenged the validity of the notion of racial or cultural homogeneity by cataloguing the great diversity of linguistic forms, cultural practices and character traits in different regions of Japan. Some also explicitly voiced disapproval of Japanese ‘racial prejudice.’ These and other counter-narratives of nation are covered in greater detail in the following section.

### Discourses of National Identity: Sustaining and Challenging Social Hierarchies

On one hand, the widely circulating gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity described above naturalise and legitimate current social hierarchies which privilege male over female and ‘Japanese’ over ‘non-Japanese’ ethnicity. On the other hand, such hegemonic discourses do not go unchallenged in participants’ discussions. Many participants read against the grain of such discourses, critiquing them and constructing counter-narratives of nation grounded in their own experiences. While I

have already discussed some of these complexities, I wish to examine in greater detail the ways participants generated and used such counter-narratives of national identity.

For instance, both male and female participants suggested that the kind of 'traditional' images of Japaneseness associated with femininity and domesticity make them feel 'relieved,' 'at ease' or 'relaxed.' They viewed the nostalgia of such feminised discourses of national identity as an antidote to the anxieties over rapid social changes. However, other participants, particularly women, contested what they considered gendered clichés of Japaneseness.<sup>120</sup> Female teachers, female public servants and female business owners suggested that contrary to popular images of 'traditional' Japanese femininity, contemporary Japanese women work, drink beer, play golf, get hangovers and travel alone just like men. For women who are discursively relegated to the realm of the domestic, the passive and the archaic by gendered clichés of Japaneseness, contesting such discourses is a way of claiming a role for themselves which is public, active and contemporary. It is a way of writing themselves in to contemporary discourses of national identity.

The ideological force of images of 'traditional' Japanese femininity is clear, however, in that many of these same participants returned to such clichés in the process of explaining their own marginality as women. For instance, Ms. Sasaki, a business woman quoted several times above, first actively rejected the patriarchal domestic arrangements which her colleagues suggested are typical of Japan; when the other business women noted that they serve their fathers and husbands the best food first and eat the inferior food themselves, she interjected, 'I take the best part right away!' Yet later in the interview, Ms. Sasaki argued that because men and women are biologically different, because women must bear children, and because men have the natural capacity to make

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<sup>120</sup> Mr. Ando, the businessman quoted a number of times above, is the only male participant to contest gendered images of 'traditional' Japaneseness to any degree, by suggesting that they simply represent a 'fantasy' or 'ideal' of Japaneseness. However, he also noted that, 'Japanese men wish women to be neatly dressed, to bow respectfully, to wear *kimono*, and to wait for us at home,' a remark which reveals that despite his awareness that such an 'ideal' is unrealistic, he may have perceived it as desirable.

decisions while women have the natural capacity to 'endure,' men and women 'could never be equal/the same' (*issho*). Despite her earlier contestation, this explanation, underpinned by notions of 'traditional' Japanese femininity, naturalises and legitimates the patriarchal social relations in which she is enmeshed.

The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that discourses of Japanese national identity are not only gendered, they are also ethnicised, either explicitly or implicitly, in ways which discursively construct an ethnically homogeneous Japan. This discourse of ethnic homogeneity has three primary effects. First, it denies the existence, or the distinctiveness, of ethnic Others in Japan. In so doing, the discourse of homogeneity silences the voices of marginalised groups such as the *Ainu* and *Ryukyuu* people and Korean and Chinese residents of Japan, and thus contributes to their on-going subordination. Secondly, the discourse of ethnic homogeneity naturalises and legitimates the rejection of foreigners in Japan. At least one participant, Mr. Taguchi, a local political figure quoted above, suggested that foreign workers and foreign spouses are problematic because they will cause 'race problems' heretofore unseen in Japan. Perceived threats to Japanese 'racial' purity can also be understood as perceived threats to the authority of those in positions of power, to the authority of men over women, of capital over labour, and of ethnic Japanese over ethnic Others. Thirdly, and finally, the discourse of ethnic homogeneity serves to reinforce the authority of the state. If the nation is imagined to be a homogeneous, organic whole, which has evolved naturally through the millennia largely untouched by outside influences, the state itself can be understood as a natural and native institution of that highly integrated structure. The state is figured, then, not as a tool of the establishment or an oppressor of the masses, but the natural and legitimate extension of 'the people.' By this logic, resistance to state authority can be dampened, as struggle against the state becomes as futile as a struggle against oneself.

However, some participants, again principally female participants, contested notions of Japanese ethnic or cultural homogeneity. Participants noted:

There isn't a unique culture in Japan anyway. It was originally introduced from overseas in the olden days [Ms. Hara, public servant];

It is a fantasy that [people] believe there is only one language and only one culture in their world. . . . I don't have that fantasy that Japan is a monoracial nation [Ms. Honda, teacher];

I don't think Japanese people think differently to other people. It's probably much the same anywhere. . . . It doesn't matter what colour of hair or eyes we have. We all perceive a lot of things in similar ways [Ms. Iwabuchi, older farmer].

Again, it is suggestive that it is women who most vocally contested dominant discourses of Japanese national identity based on the notion of ethnic and cultural homogeneity. While some participants are generally more reflexive than others, it seems that people who are marginalised within widely circulating discourses of national identity on the basis of an ascribed characteristic such as gender, are more likely to contest such discourses.

I noted in the previous chapter that even those Australian participants who most strongly critiqued widely circulating discourses of national identity nonetheless utilised such tropes as they negotiated discourses of Australian national identity. The same holds true for Japanese participants. Although Ms. Hara rejected the notion of a 'unique culture in Japan,' she had earlier explained the Japanese custom of *o-chuugen* (mid-year gift-giving) in the following way: 'If someone is really helpful, we send them a gift. But why do we do that? Because it's Japan. It's our ancient custom. It's our culture.' Likewise, while Ms. Honda critiqued the notion of Japanese monoracialism, she returned several times during our interview to the theme of pan-Asian ethnicity; specifically, she mentioned 'psychological' differences between 'Asians' and 'white' Europeans and North Americans. Similarly, although Ms. Iwabuchi rejected the notion of fundamental differences between 'Japanese' and 'non-Japanese,' in the course of our focus group she and her colleagues exchanged information about the foreign farm workers in their township and surrounding communities. Comments regarding 'how many' and 'what kind of' foreigners resided nearby suggested that foreigners were considered sufficiently different so as to be the subject of interest and conversation.

As I argued earlier, such apparent contradictions should not be taken as an indication that the hegemonic discourses of national identity are unassailable. The fact that participants broke away from such discourses even momentarily suggests that these discourses are imperfect, unstable and contestable. Furthermore, participants' perceptions of the research process may have shaped the way they drew on widely circulating images of Japaneseness. That is, participants may have framed their own experiences and perceptions in the terms of reference established by authorised discourses of national identity for the benefit of a foreign researcher. In any case, counter-narratives such as those participants constructed, whether brief or more elaborated, contribute to the subtle reshaping of discourses of national identity over time.

### Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter, I have examined the ways categories of gender and ethnicity crosscut five dimensions of national identity in folk discourses of Japaneseness: national archetypes and the national character; social relations and social ethics; everyday practice; material and symbolic culture; and the environment. I have argued that discourses of national identity are gendered and ethnicised in ways that mirror, sustain and challenge the material marginalisation of women and ethnic minorities in Japan.

Specifically, most folk discourses of nation construct men as active agents of national progress, and women as passive, domestic bearers of 'tradition,' while ethnic minorities are either rendered virtually invisible or constructed as essentialised Others. Such constructions reproduce both the dual ideologies of patriarchy and ethnic Japanese proprietorship of the nation, and the material effects of these ideologies. However, even as participants contribute to such gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity, they challenge such discourses. Some participants, particularly women, explicitly rejected the notions of Japanese ethnic homogeneity and 'traditional' Japanese femininity. Drawing on their own experiences, they constructed counter-narratives in which women

and ethnic minorities play more active, more contemporary and more prominent roles in discourses of Japanese national identity.

Folk discourses of Japanese national identity evidence considerable overlap with mass mediated and authorised discourses. In particular, the 'traditional' feminine symbols of Japaneseness which feature prominently in television advertisements are evoked regularly in folk discourses of national identity. Likewise, in participants' explications of national identity, they employ concepts such as *omote/ura*, *honne/tatemae* and *haji*, which epitomise Japanese uniqueness in the authorised discourses of the *Nihonjinron*. Furthermore, there is significant overlap between participants' claims of Japanese ethnic homogeneity and authorised discourses and practices which obscure the presence of ethnic Others in the national community. This does not suggest, however, that authorised discourses of national identity ultimately *determine* folk accounts of Japaneseness. Rather, the evidence presented here suggests that there is a constant interplay between diverse discourses of national identity; and these discourses are unstable, dynamic and open to contestation.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### GLOBALISATION AND NATIONAL IDENTITIES IN AUSTRALIA AND JAPAN

In the previous four chapters I examined the discursive construction of gendered and ethnicised national identities in Australia and Japan, and argued that people in these two national contexts employ such discourses in ways which both sustain and challenge current social hierarchies based on gender and ethnicity. What remains to be examined in this study is how globalisation is related to these discursive constructions of national identity in Australia and Japan.

In the first part of this chapter, I draw on Australian and Japanese transcript data to explore how Australians and Japanese experience, understand and respond to recent globalising social changes, principally in the form of Australian multiculturalism and Japanese internationalisation. I then examine the relationship between these globalising changes and discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan.

#### Folk Discourses of Globalisation

Australian and Japanese participants' accounts of globalisation reveal a high degree of engagement with globalisation, primarily in the form of Australian multiculturalism and Japanese internationalisation.<sup>121</sup> A number of themes emerge out of participants' discussions of globalisation. Most notably, a large number of both Australian and Japanese participants discussed the following: the inevitability of globalisation; globalisation as a source of entertainment and novelty (a kind of global bazaar/bizarre); globalisation as an engine of social progress; and globalisation as a source of social

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<sup>121</sup> Because I suspected that Australian participants would distinguish between globalisation and multiculturalism, I asked them about both. However, since, as explained in Chapter Three, the term 'internationalisation' (*kokusaika*) effectively encompasses all globalising processes, and because there is no other equivalent Japanese term for 'globalisation' as I have defined it, I asked Japanese participants only about 'internationalisation.' However, as I argue below, the similarities between participants' discussions of globalisation, multiculturalism and internationalisation suggest that, in folk discourses, these three terms are largely synonymous.

disintegration. However, throughout Australian and Japanese discussions, there was little consensus about the significance or the consequences of globalisation. Participants constantly constructed, contested and reconstructed the meanings of such key terms as 'globalisation,' 'multiculturalism' and 'internationalisation,' and provided shifting and complex accounts of the links between these phenomena and national identities.

### *Globalisation as lived experience*

Participants in both Australia and Japan remarked with some regularity that globalisation is 'a fact of life' [Jack, Australian farmer], 'a reality' [Roger, Australian teacher], 'something we can't avoid' [Mr. Ando, business owner], or 'a necessity' [Ms. Shimizu, Japanese farmer]. Such statements appear to be informed both by widely circulating mass mediated and authorised discourses which suggest that globalisation is a key dynamic in contemporary industrialised societies, and by participants' lived experiences of globalisation.

Both Australians and Japanese provided detailed accounts of their engagement with globalisation. For instance, although I did not systematically record data on participants' family backgrounds, in the course of interviews and focus groups, roughly fifteen percent of Australian participants noted that they were migrants, or children of migrants, from either Southern, Central or Northern Europe, the United Kingdom or New Zealand. A further ten percent noted that they were either married to a migrant or had family members who resided overseas. In addition to such personal encounters with migration, a large number of participants, including both male and female farmers, public servants, teachers and employees, recounted stories of international travel, and/or suggested that international contacts were an important part of their jobs or businesses.

Interestingly, however, Australian participants' lived experiences of globalisation and their perceptions of the relevance of globalisation to their lives were often quite different. Despite being migrants themselves, or living among migrants, having a number of international connections through business and travel, and encountering the global through everyday consumption practices (which participants explain include exposure to

global mass media, the Internet, and 'ethnic' food), many participants stated that globalisation and multiculturalism are not relevant to their everyday lives. For example, Anne, herself a British migrant, challenged the relevance of globalisation by arguing that it is merely 'a nice long word which people who really don't understand what it means say as often as possible, because it sounds good.' Likewise, Bernard, also a British migrant, suggested that multiculturalism is of little importance to him, despite his observation that sometimes migrants outnumber locals at his neighbourhood pub. He noted, 'I must admit I haven't really thought an awful lot about [multiculturalism], because it doesn't affect us down here.' Similarly, when asked whether she feels the effects of globalisation in her community, Carrie, a female employee responded,

Not a great deal, really. I mean we have got, as I said, like my next-door neighbour, he's an American. And I know a few, I suppose, I know some people from England, [and] there is New Zealand. But not a great deal. Or not to my knowledge anyway. I mean, there could be, in town, and that sort of thing. But down here, there aren't many from the different parts of the world.

This excerpt is interesting, first, because it reveals that Carrie sees globalisation as largely irrelevant to her lived experiences; she does not consider her everyday encounters with migrants from the United States, New Zealand and the United Kingdom to be part of a larger process of globalisation. Secondly, the excerpt reveals the degree to which Carrie's perceptions of globalisation and multiculturalism overlap. In this response, globalisation and multiculturalism are seen to be effectively identical; both are equated with the presence of migrants from non-English-speaking backgrounds.

Similarly, other participants suggested that, while globalisation and multiculturalism may have far-reaching effects, they are not relevant to their everyday lives. Teachers Phillip and Roger, for instance, argued that while globalisation and multiculturalism have affected Australia as a whole, their local rural communities have not felt these effects. Interestingly, both participants, in separate interviews, suggested that the effects of globalisation are only felt in wealthier segments of Australian society. In their economically depressed rural communities, they explained, most people are

unable to afford imported commodities, computers to access the Internet, or overseas travel, and therefore their encounters with globalisation are limited. Likewise, they argued, because their communities are experiencing high unemployment, there are no jobs to draw migrants to the area, and therefore the impact of multiculturalism is limited.

Such observations neatly capture the perceived conflict between people trying to make their livings in the increasingly stagnant economy of rural Australia, and the relatively prosperous urban intellectuals who make their (our) living studying and writing about globalisation. Also exposed is a tension between authorised and mass mediated discussions of globalisation and everyday experiences of globalisation. These contradictions become apparent in participants' ambivalence toward globalisation.

Focus group discussions reveal a high degree of disagreement among participants over both the meaning and the perceived impact of globalisation and multiculturalism. For example, this exchange among four business owners reveals four distinct understandings of globalising processes:

Charles: [Globalisation] certainly does affect my business. . . . I mean, we are on the Internet these days. I can get inquiries from the U.K., America, anywhere. . . . I can communicate almost instantly with those people through e-mail. And that, to me, is globalisation working in our industry. . . . This country just couldn't exist without the globalisation of its economy.

Edward: But do you think, Charles, that . . . because of the costs involved in getting onto these networks, that it's now impossible for a single bloke to open a [business] in Plainsview? And it will be more so next year and the year after. . . . Globalisation is concentrating ownership of businesses into smaller and smaller hands.

Conrad: I must admit that I don't have a very good feeling or understanding of globalisation.

Trent: Australia sort of seems to be globalised more than anyone else. You know, like all the people that come in here, but you don't hear of groups of Australians migrating to China or like that. And I find here now, even in my business, that we get quite a few different migrants down here, you know, different people.

In this brief excerpt, it is clear that Charles associated globalisation with the expanded opportunities afforded by new technologies; Edward focused on what he perceives to be the changing balance of power brought about by the globalisation of capital; Conrad admitted that he simply does not understand globalisation; and Trent equated globalisation with migration and multicultural diversity.

Clearly participants defined 'globalisation' and 'multiculturalism' in a variety of ways, reflecting the diversity of definitions circulating through government, academic and popular discussions of these two contemporary buzzwords. The way participants defined these terms undoubtedly informed their perceptions of the relevance of globalisation and multiculturalism to their lives. Many participants who associated 'globalisation' with phenomena such as global financial markets, multinational corporations, or supra-national political entities like the United Nations, regarded it as largely irrelevant to their lives. However, many of those who conceptualised 'globalisation' as contact with people, commodities and information from outside Australia regarded it as a significant part of their everyday lives. Likewise, those participants who associated 'multiculturalism' with the presence of large numbers of 'non-white' or non-English-speaking background migrants saw little evidence of this phenomenon in their predominantly 'white' communities. However, those participants who associated 'multiculturalism' with expanded knowledge of other cultures and attitudes of 'tolerance' and 'acceptance' tended to perceive multiculturalism as a dynamic force in their local communities.

Likewise, the comments of a large number of Japanese participants suggest that they are actively engaged in globalisation, particularly through travel, work and consumption practices. Although I did not systematically gather data on participants' overseas experiences, in the course of interviews and focus groups almost twenty-five percent of participants noted that they had travelled abroad for business, pleasure or study. Furthermore, a large number of participants, including teachers, public servants, business owners and farmers, suggested that international contacts were an important part of their jobs or businesses. Finally, participants in all social locations indicated that imported commodities were increasingly a part of their everyday lives.

Despite describing extensive encounters with the people, commodities and information associated with globalisation, or internationalisation, most Japanese participants suggested that it is not particularly relevant or meaningful to them. In the words of participants:

I think Japanese people, including myself, really don't know what internationalisation is, although the word has really spread [Ms. Wada, teacher];

It's now the age of internationalisation . . . but it is difficult to say what internationalisation actually is [Mr. Hata, public servant];

I don't really understand what [internationalisation] means. It hasn't really penetrated here. I think people here don't really consider it important [Ms. Sasaki, business owner];

In our everyday lives, no one is aware of internationalisation very much, unless people have some connection to internationalisation through their work [Mr. Takenaka, employee];

I hear the word [internationalisation] very often, but I don't usually think about what it means [Ms. Mitsui, farmer].

Even Mr. Taguchi, a senior public servant who led early prefectural study-abroad programs to North America, initiated international student exchange programs in Hirogawa, and was instrumental in publishing Hirogawa's first information pamphlet for foreign visitors, suggested that internationalisation has not had much of an impact in Hokkaido. He explained that, unlike city dwellers, rural Japanese are still willing to undertake manual labour, so there is no need to recruit foreign workers for these low-skill jobs. With this low level of migration, he reasoned, the impact of internationalisation is limited.

In contrast to such views, some participants stressed the centrality of internationalisation in their everyday lives. For example, when asked whether internationalisation was relevant even to farmers in a small town like Hirogawa, these young farmers responded:

Mr. Hosokawa: Yes, I think so.

Mr. Kada It's the most relevant to us!

Mr. Hosokawa: I think it's relevant on the technological side. . . . There are many people who use imported machines. If we consider the specific details, every farmer is involved with imports. . . . So, that considered, I think internationalisation is necessary.

As was the case with Australians' understandings of globalisation and multiculturalism, Japanese participants understood internationalisation in a variety of ways, and the way they defined internationalisation determined its perceived relevance to their lives. As suggested above, a large number of participants expressed confusion over what internationalisation entails; therefore it is not surprising that they doubted its relevance in their lives. Furthermore, participants such as Mr. Taguchi, quoted above, equated internationalisation with migration, a phenomenon which has little impact on the everyday lives of Japanese in a small rural community such as Hirogawa. Finally, still other participants, such as the young farmers quoted above, equated internationalisation with the realms of technology and the economy. Thus defined, internationalisation was perceived to have a profound impact on their livelihoods and lives. Regardless of their perceptions of internationalisation, however, Japanese participants in all social locations discussed everyday encounters with the people, commodities, information and processes associated with internationalisation, indicating a high level of engagement with globalisation as I have defined it.

### *The inevitability of globalisation*

One of the few points on which most Australian and most Japanese participants agreed is the inevitability of globalisation, sometimes expressed as the 'necessity' to globalise. When asked whether globalisation is good or bad for their respective nations, a large number of participants provided similar answers:

Whether it's good or bad . . . it's a fact of life. You can't stop it, or you can't say anything about it [Jack, Australian farmer];

It's not a matter of good or bad. We have to go through this. It's just something we can't avoid. . . . It's necessary [Mr. Ando, Japanese business owner];

I think it's necessary and we have to go ahead with it. [If we don't] we will be isolated from other countries [Ms. Wada, Japanese teacher];

I think you've got to [globalise], or you get left behind [Roy, Australian public servant].

Even participants who were critical of globalisation did not suggest that their nations could, or should try to, withdraw from it. Australian business owners Leanne and Nick, for example, advocated tight restrictions on immigration, and the implementation of protectionist tariffs, measures they suggested would insulate the Australian economy and Australian culture from the disruptive forces of globalisation. However, they also indicated that it is acceptable, even desirable, for Australia to engage in global trade, but only as a provider, not a consumer, of global commodities.

Leanne: We're killing our own pigs. We're digging them into the ground. We're throwing out our oranges.

Nick: Because we dropped our tariffs.

Leanne: And Australia is the only country on this bloody earth that can be self-sufficient. It is the only continent on the face of the earth that can be self-sufficient. We have got everything. And quite frankly, why we let the rest of the world dictate to us, I have no idea.

Nick: And stuff the United Nations, because they are not doing anything for us except harming us.

Leanne: This is Australia. We can be self-sufficient. And if they want our stuff, they can bloody well pay for it. I don't need your oranges. I have got my own oranges but if you want *my* oranges you can buy them. I've got my own pork. I don't need your pork.

Nick: That's exactly right.



There were no such outspoken critics of globalisation amongst Japanese participants. However, even those who voiced reservations about, or criticisms of, globalisation did not advocate retreating from it. For example, a group of older male farmers lamented the fact that because of the globalisation of trade, specifically the liberalisation of Japan's market, 'We don't know what the future of farming holds' [Mr. Iwai]. As one man noted, 'I wonder how we can go on' [Mr. Iwabuchi]. After further discussion they agreed, however, that without globalisation, Japan as a whole would not enjoy the level of prosperity it currently does.

Mr. Iwabuchi: If we didn't have many imports, farmers could make a good living. . . . If there were no imports . . . we could sell our produce at the price we wanted. However, as a whole, Japan has benefited from *kokusaika* in manufacturing and exporting cars, electrical goods, video players and so on. If there were no *kokusaika*, Japan would still be a miserable country like North Korea.<sup>122</sup>

Mr. Aiba: If it had continued to be like the olden days, Japan would be like North Korea. I suppose we should admit that we are fortunate to be like this.

Mr. Iwabuchi: If Japan weren't internationalised, our standard of living wouldn't be the same.

Participants in Australia and Japan clearly had a variety of opinions on whether globalisation is good or bad, whether it presents new opportunities or threatens 'traditional' ways of life. However, there was widespread agreement that globalisation is inevitable, a necessity of the contemporary world, for better or for worse.

### *The global bazaar/bizarre*

A second theme in Australian and Japanese folk discourses of globalisation centred around commodity and spectacle. A consumption-oriented, even voyeuristic, engagement with globalisation emerged out of Australian and Japanese discussions of globalisation, multiculturalism and internationalisation. Participants stressed both the new

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<sup>122</sup> Mr. Iwabuchi used the expression '*mijime na kuni*,' literally, a miserable or pitiable country, which probably refers to the North Korean food shortages which were making headlines in Japan at the time of the interview.

commodities, knowledge and experiences available in the increasingly global marketplace, the global 'bazaar,' and the pleasure of gazing upon the alien, the novel, the 'bizarre' people, places, practices and objects which globalisation brings to their doorsteps, or often to their lounge-room televisions.

In Chapter Five I quoted an Australian teacher, Phillip, in his description of the goals of multiculturalism: 'To try their food, to watch their dances, to view their films, let them speak their language and respect them for that. . . . It add[s] a lot of colour.' His description highlights two of the most prominent themes in Australian participants' discussions of globalisation and multiculturalism, food and spectacle. A broad cross-section of participants, including male and female teachers, public servants, business owners and farmers, argued that food is a major part of globalising change in Australia. In fact, in discussions of globalisation and multiculturalism, food emerged as one of the most common, and non-threatening, ways of encountering the Other. Even business owner Leanne, who was highly critical of globalisation and multiculturalism, reflected positively on the kind of smorgasbord multiculturalism to which her mother, as a migrant, contributed:

We used to have multicultural day at school . . . out in the middle of Hick Town.<sup>123</sup> We had a multicultural day once a year. . . . We had these stands, and they would have, like, a picture of the national dress of the country, the flags, and say if it was France, I think it was a picture of the Eiffel Tower or something, and the *Arc de Triomphe* and stuff like that. And then we had some French food, and there were French bottles of wine and things like that. . . . My mum used to do a [display] for them. And everyone would go for [her food], because they had all been to my house and had [her cooking]. And they were happy to accept all of that. . . . They were very accepting of that sort of multiculturalism.

Leanne went on to argue, however, that while this kind of taste-testing at the global bazaar is acceptable, multiculturalism has gone 'too far' in Australia, to the point where the integrity of the national culture is compromised. 'We have lost something along the way,' she noted. 'We have lost our Australian identity.'

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<sup>123</sup> 'Hick Town' is Leanne's own term for her home town.

I will return to the issue of changing national identity below. First, however, another theme to emerge out of participants' discussions of multiculturalism and globalisation, was the pleasure of viewing the spectacle associated with globalising trends. Participants including teachers, public servants, business owners and farmers, spoke positively about the festivals, costumes and art forms, as well as the 'colour,' which 'ethnics' introduce into Australian society. Participants' choice of the terms 'colour' and 'colourful' reveal a blurring of literal colour (the skin, hair and eye colour of 'ethnics') and metaphorical colour (the pleasant novelty of viewing Other people, practices and commodities). As Paula, a teacher, noted,

I would just like to see more of it [ethnic diversity in her school]. And more of a wider representation than just the Anglo-Saxon, you know. So maybe some Asian children or some African children . . . just to make it a more colourful mix in the school. I shouldn't use the word "colour" [laughing] . . . but, yes.

While Australian participants stressed largely the pleasurable aspects of consuming the commodities and spectacles of the global bazaar/bizarre, some also suggested that this consumption comes at a high social cost to the nation. Just as Leanne, quoted above, suggested that too much multiculturalism undermines Australian national identity, a group of high school girls expressed concerns that Australia's national debt will grow from an over-reliance on imports (which they nonetheless refer to as 'the cool stuff'). Likewise, Rose, a business owner, voiced fears that access to inappropriate material on the Internet would 'pollute young minds' in Australia. Similarly, a group of female farmers raised concerns about the foreign values being imported along with foreign commodities. As Mary Ann noted, 'Influences like McDonalds and other worldwide things like Coca Cola. . . really are trying to get their message out to everybody. . . . I think that's the concept I have trouble with--just the values that that brings with it.'<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> It is possible that participants chose McDonalds and Coca Cola as examples because I had shown them television advertisements for both of these products. However, even before they had seen these advertisements, some participants offered these products as examples of globalisation.

Ted, a public servant, also gave McDonalds as an example of the negative effects of globalisation, specifically, the threat globalisation poses to cultural diversity. He observed, '[McDonalds] represents the worst side of globalisation. . . . It sort of breaks down those identities, the local character of those areas. It Americanises everything.' Likewise, Louise, an older farmer, was among a number of participants who voiced concerns over the perceived homogenising effects of globalisation:

Whilst I believe that globalisation is good, I mean, you go around and the kids are speaking with American slang. . . . Far better that American children speak American slang and Australian children speak Australian slang, and British children speak British slang. . . . Because that's the loveliest thing about being able to go around the world and see all the different cultures and traditions and the way people live. . . . [But] when you see the young kids, even the way they dress, the baggy, long shorts and the baseball caps on backward. It doesn't matter if you are in France, England, South Africa. . . . Everybody's sort of trending toward the same common denominators, you know, in everything. So I don't know. I think it would be a great pity.

Even such concerns about cultural homogenisation appear to be consumption-oriented, however. In the above excerpt, it is not cultural diversity for its own sake that Louise fears losing; rather, she disapproves of cultural homogenisation, 'because that's the loveliest thing about being able to go around the world and see all the different cultures and traditions and the way people live.' In other words, she disapproves of such homogenisation because it would deprive her of the pleasurable spectacle of diversity, the global bazaar/bizarre.

Japanese participants also focused on the global as bazaar/bizarre in their discussions of internationalisation. Participants consistently described internationalisation in terms of encounters with foreign commodities, with foreign languages, and with foreign people. Japanese participants in all social locations discussed the material changes internationalisation has introduced to their everyday lives. A wide range of participants suggested, for example, that the adoption of 'Western,' and especially 'American' food, clothing and household items is a key part of internationalisation. When asked to define internationalisation, Ms. Osada, a public servant, explained that, 'Japan is changing to be like foreign countries. . . . Japan copies

what America does. For example, people in Japan used to have Japanese-style houses with *tatami* rooms, but now they have big, luxurious houses. Because the age has changed, people copy Western styles.'

A group of male teachers took up a similar theme when discussing the increasing use of English and English loan words in Japan, another feature of internationalisation frequently noted by a wide range of participants.<sup>125</sup>

Mr. Takahashi: Japanese think it's cool if they use English words. Even if there are translations in Japanese and it's not appropriate to use English words, they still intentionally use the English terms for such things as the news, or for anything.

Mr. Sato: They use English words in an unnatural way.

Mr. Takahashi: Japanese people are easily influenced by foreign culture, especially by Western culture. They are affected easily. So people younger than us, those under twenty, or junior and senior high school students, would think it's cool.

Participants including high school students, teachers, public servants, employees and retirees, suggested that learning another language, usually English, is one way of becoming a *kokusaijin* (literally an 'international person;' however, the term 'global citizen' captures the sense of the term more closely). While some suggested that learning English is necessary, 'because there are a lot of foreign people in Japan now, and you have to be able to talk to them' [Ms. Doi, high school student], others stressed that they study another language because it is 'interesting,' and 'enjoyable' [female employees]. Many also hoped to use their language skills to establish friendships with foreigners.

While foreign commodities and even languages to a certain degree, are part of the global bazaar which participants described in their discussions of internationalisation, foreign people were seen by many to be a source of pleasurable spectacle. As Mr. Miyake, an employee, noted, 'People in the countryside of Japan just like to see foreigners. They're a rarity.' Likewise, a group of female public servants explained:

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<sup>125</sup> For a detailed discussion of the use of English and English loanwords in Japan, see Hogan (1993).

- Ms. Mita: We don't see many people from overseas here. We get excited when we meet them.
- Ms. Ueki: We get flustered.
- Ms. Mita: We are not surprised, but we want to take a photograph of them.
- Ms. Ueki: Or shake hands with them or talk with them.
- Ms. Ochiai: But when we meet Chinese or Korean people, we're not as excited as when we meet Westerners.
- Ms. Mita: Because of the face.
- Ms. Ochiai: We don't realise they're not Japanese.

The ethnicity, or 'face,' of non-Asians is not only novel, 'bizarre,' and therefore pleasurable to gaze upon, it is also, in a sense, commodified. In the above exchange, foreigners themselves become part of the global bazaar, objects to be admired, desired and photographed.<sup>126</sup>

Although a broad cross-section of Japanese participants equated internationalisation with the global bazaar/bizarre detailed above, an equally wide range of participants stressed the inadequacy of such consumption-oriented, or voyeuristic, understandings of internationalisation. Participants including teachers, public servants, business owners and farmers, suggested that internationalisation is not simply a matter of learning a foreign language, adopting a foreign 'lifestyle' (by which participants generally mean adopting imported commodities), or even travelling abroad. Rather, internationalisation was said to require a genuine understanding and acceptance of Other cultures and Other people, and two-way cultural exchanges, as this group of teachers indicated:

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<sup>126</sup> If, from a Foucauldian perspective, surveillance is power, then photography is an act of power maintenance and a photograph is the material evidence of that power. Therefore, snapshots of foreign Others and foreign objects can be seen as a way of managing the complex mixture of fear and fascination with these Others, or Other-objects. See Crawshaw and Urry (1997).

- Interviewer: What do you think internationalisation is?
- Mr. Sato: That's difficult to answer.
- Mr. Takahashi: If we are just learning the English language, that's not internationalisation.
- Mr. Oomori: Internationalisation is even in our teachers' guide. If we were asked what internationalisation is, we would answer that it's not only studying languages but also learning about different cultures and customs. That would be internationalisation.
- Mr. Takahashi: To do that, we have to be able to introduce our culture to--
- Mr. Oomori: Yes, it's not only accepting other cultures, but also introducing our culture to others. That's internationalisation, according to the teachers' guide.
- Interviewer: Could you give any examples of what you might do to introduce Japanese culture?
- Mr. Oomori: What would we do? It's hard to imagine because I'm not really involved in this sort of thing. . . . I'd rather leave the major part of internationalisation, such as culture, to people who do it for a living.

This exchange highlights not only perceptions that internationalisation is more than merely spectacle and consumption, but also a perception that internationalisation is being managed by people who 'do it for a living.'

Perceptions of this professional staging of internationalisation also emerged out of participants' discussions of international imagery in advertisements. As mentioned in Chapter Six, many participants suggested that advertisers use foreign actors, settings and languages to give their product a 'cool' or 'high class' image. A group of teachers took this point one step further to suggest that 'internationalisation' is simply a novel way of selling products. Commenting on an advertisement which featured a foreign actor, they noted:

Ms. Kondo: It seems like an international image but--

Ms. Wada: It's just something to manipulate consumers and get their attention.

Ms. Noguchi: A means of selling a product.

This exchange suggests that internationalisation serves not only to facilitate the consumption of Other commodities and spectacles, but that internationalisation itself is a commodity, a saleable signifier which imbues material objects with symbolic value. In short, internationalisation becomes an exploitable image, 'a means of selling a product.'

The passage again highlights the centrality of the global bazaar/bizarre in Japanese encounters with, and folk discourses of, globalisation. Although many Japanese and Australian participants challenged this essentially consumerist and voyeuristic orientation to globalisation, the transcript evidence above suggests that this is one important way participants conceptualised globalisation. However, rather than viewing such an orientation as a superficial response to globalisation, such a response shows that participants draw on their everyday lived experiences in the process of interpreting the globalising social processes which are transforming their worlds. It is to these perceived transformations that I turn next.

### *Social progress and social crisis*

As I suggested above, among both Australian and Japanese participants, there was little consensus about the consequences of globalisation; participants in both national settings suggested that globalisation is a source of both social progress and social crisis. Both Australian and Japanese participants suggested, for example, that globalisation has the capacity to promote democracy, greater environmental awareness, the development of a freer and more peaceful 'borderless world,' and greater equality for all people regardless of their gender or ethnicity. However, they also suggested that globalisation fuels undesirable social trends (such as the breakdown of families, communities, and values,



and the increase in crime and social inequality), and has the potential to destabilise their respective national economies, and undermine their respective national identities.

Regarding the democratising effects of globalisation, for instance, Japanese retirees explained that although they had been manipulated by the national leadership during World War II, with globalised information and communication technologies now available, 'We know more about what's happening, so we are not going to be fooled again' [Ms. Hamabata]. Similarly, older Australian farmers suggested that globalised mass media create greater political transparency, making it more difficult for national leaders to abuse their positions of power. As one farmer put it:

The general speed of communication and information is so rapid, and everything that occurs around the world is known instantly to everybody around the world. . . . And you can't be in isolation. Like China might try to . . . keep in isolation. But everybody that has got access to television, which nearly everybody has these days, can see what is happening in the world, and can't be kept behind information barriers, like they could in the past. . . . So that stops a lot of the mumbo-jumbo that kept people in their place, by dictators and what have you in the past. It can't be swung these days [Gus].

A broad cross-section of both Australian and Japanese participants also associated globalisation with issues of environmental protection and world peace. For instance, when asked how she would define globalisation, Lisa, an Australian teacher, explained,

Well, I suppose it's just a consciousness thing, isn't it. That we are not just part of a country or even a district, but a world. And I suppose with issues like, you know, pollution and war and things like that, that you have to take responsibility for them as part of the world, not just part of a local culture. . . . That's the kind of concept I try to get across to the kids. That we are all in one world.

Likewise, explaining Japan's need to internationalise, Ms. Noguchi, a Japanese teacher, commented, 'Because the globe is one and we all share the same atmosphere, we can't just improve our own country. . . . There are problems such as water and air pollution, and since we live together on one planet, we want to get together to discuss them. . . . So we can't be isolated from the [rest of] the world.'

A number of Australian and Japanese participants also shared a utopian vision of a 'borderless world,' characterised by world peace, a high degree of trust and cooperation between different regions of the globe, and the unfettered circulation of people, goods and knowledge. In discussing the economic and social consequences of internationalisation, for instance, Ms. Kuroda, a Japanese business owner, detailed a plan she said she had had since childhood. In Ms. Kuroda's hopes for the future, she envisioned a world divided not into nations, but into productive units. Some geographical areas would specialise in agricultural production, and others in manufacturing, mineral extraction and so on, with a system of cooperatively owned and managed global transportation and communications networks. 'When that happens,' she explained, 'there will be no war.' In a similarly optimistic vision of the future, Dominic, an Australian public servant, expressed hopes that globalisation will lead to the obliteration of national borders and the lifting of restrictions on work and travel in all regions of the globe. He admitted that some people would object to such a system out of the fear that newcomers would take their jobs; but, on the contrary, he explained, 'It is not actually taking something away from me. It is giving me a bigger village to run around in.'

Participants in both Australia and Japan also suggested that globalisation is breaking down inequalities based on gender and ethnicity in their respective nations. A broad cross-section of both Australian and Japanese participants, for instance, suggested that as memories of World War II start to fade, there is a consequent reduction of racism in their respective countries, and greater openness to new people, practices and ideas. Some participants also argued that such globalising processes are particularly significant for women. Both male and female teachers in Australia, for instance, explained that the economic restructuring associated with globalisation has provided women with expanded job opportunities, while jobs for men have become increasingly scarce. While the teachers noted the liberating possibilities for women, however, they also suggested that such changes were provoking a backlash among some sectors of their local communities.

Japanese participants in a wide range of social locations also argued that globalising social changes have particular consequences for women. For instance, Ms.

Ueno, the senior teacher quoted at some length in the previous chapter, spoke about the gradual increase in high-rank female educators in the prefecture. When asked what she thinks is driving such changes, she responded, 'This is related to international matters, such as the discourse of gender equality. . . . The increase of female [senior teachers] is part of this.' In a similar vein, Japanese public servants suggested that internationalisation holds greater promises for women than for men.

Ms. Hara: Internationalisation has influenced equality for men and women. [Japan used to be] male dominated, but as other cultures have been introduced to Japan, it has become freer. . . . Women probably accept it [internationalisation] more than men do. . . . I think it's beneficial to women.

Interviewer: To women more than to men?

Ms. Hara: It's all about social power.

Ms. Osawa: Japanese women hope that Japan will adopt an American manner of respecting women. In America, men support women, even when they deliver babies.

Ms. Hara: They consider it a job to be shared by both men and women.

Ms. Osawa: Women hope this will change to their own benefit. . . . People like to accept the parts of internationalisation which are beneficial to them.

The above exchange highlights not only a perception that the consequences of internationalisation are gendered, but also a perception that people have the power to accept or reject specific kinds of globalising social changes. However, relatively few Japanese or Australian participants suggested that people have the power to choose whether or not to be engaged with globalisation. Rather, participants more commonly discussed the destabilising and disintegrative effects of globalisation. Participants in both nations, for example, noted the negative economic impacts of globalisation, an especially strong theme among farmers. Some participants even suggested that globalisation is actually a plot, by other nations or supranational organisations such as the United Nations, to weaken and control their respective nations. For instance, while a number of

Australian business owners and farmers argued that ‘globalisation,’ ‘free trade’ and a ‘level playing field’ are simply concepts used by more powerful nations to more fully exploit less powerful nations, one Japanese business owner, Ms. Osumi, more explicitly linked a number of globalising social changes in Japan with an American plot to gradually transform and weaken the nation. She explained:

Another point I’ve heard is that we were a defeated nation, and this has had an influence little by little, as America intended. It is just over fifty years since the war. When Japan was defeated and surrendered unconditionally, America didn’t ruin Japan all at once. As they planned, during the last fifty years, America has changed Japan from the inside through education, entertainment, sports, music, movies, etcetera, and Japan was taken in by this. What we are seeing in Japan is its results. That was written in a book, and it made me feel it was right. . . . It was a plan to make Japan less industrious.

Two points are of particular interest here. First, Ms. Osumi explained that she took this argument from a book. This highlights the extent to which folk discourses of globalisation are informed by other widely circulating discourses. Secondly, although Ms. Osumi is somewhat atypical in detailing such a conscious conspiracy by a specified national Other, her opinions simply represent a more extreme version of those expressed by a large number of both Japanese and Australian participants, who suggested they are powerless to stop the undesirable social trends associated with globalisation.

Among such undesirable social changes, both Japanese and Australian participants identified the breakdown of families, communities and values and the increase in crime and social inequality. In Chapter Six I discussed Japanese perceptions that globalising social changes were leading to the decline of the work ethic and national morals and to a possible ‘race problem’ resulting from an increase in marriages between Japanese and non-Japanese. Some Japanese participants also expressed concern over the crime perceived to accompany internationalisation. As one young male farmer noted, ‘There are drugs and guns which weren’t a problem before. Since overseas relationships have deepened, marijuana, heroin, stimulant drugs, and guns have spread in Japan. It’s scary.

These kind of cases are happening often these days in Japan, and I feel that this is a part of internationalisation' [Mr. Hosokawa].

Similarly, a broad cross-section of Australian participants suggested that globalisation is turning rural communities into 'ghost towns,' resulting in high unemployment, welfare dependency and the consequent breakdown of families and community spirit. Furthermore, in comments strikingly similar to those made by Japanese participants, many Australians expressed concerns about the rise in crime, drug use and violence thought to be a result of globalisation. Female retirees observed, for instance, that migrants have made Australia 'more violent;' male public servants and male and female business owners suggested that drug trafficking and violent clashes between 'ethnics' have increased as a result of increased 'non-white' immigration; and one public servant noted that globalisation has introduced a 'criminal element' not seen before in Australia [Nancy], an interesting act of selective memory, given that many of Australia's earliest European colonisers were exiled convicts.

Australian business owner Edward, perhaps best captured the fear and pessimism which many participants, both in Australia and Japan, expressed about globalisation, when he observed:

[It's] a terror, really, globalisation. . . . In globalisation, everything becomes the bloody same Western culture, *per se*, which is absolutely lousy. . . . All those magnificent different buildings and the different languages, globalisation is attempting to destroy all that, and make just one terrible modern Western culture--[one] hedonistic, self-seeking, destructive society.

While Edward is atypical in the passion with which he denounced globalisation, he touched on a number of key themes among other participants, themes of social disintegration, moral decline, and cultural loss.

### *Social location and responses to globalisation*

As I have already noted, I began conducting interviews and focus groups in Australia and Japan with the expectation that people in different social locations would encounter, understand and respond to globalisation in quite different ways. I anticipated that I would

find significant differences between age groups and occupational groups, and between male and female participants. Overall, differences between these groups were less prominent and more subtle than expected.

There were no discernible differences between male and female accounts of globalisation. The most prominent differences between the groups in their accounts of globalisation were differences by age. In general, younger age groups reported a higher degree of engagement with global commodities, technologies and national Others. However, of all age groups in the study, the youngest participants, high school students in both Australia and Japan, demonstrated the least detailed understandings of globalisation; few seemed to have consciously contemplated globalisation previously, and some were unfamiliar with the concept. Among the oldest participants in the study, Australian and Japanese retirees, quite the opposite was true. That is, of all age groups, retirees detailed the lowest degree of engagement with global products, technologies and national Others; however, they constructed more detailed accounts of issues of globalisation than student participants. This suggests that globalisation is increasingly in the realm of the taken-for-granted in Australia and Japan. Those who have grown up in an environment of intensified globalisation, do not perceive of globalisation as problematic, but simply as a fact of life. It is those who have witnessed the acceleration of globalising social changes over recent decades who regard globalisation as an 'issue,' requiring conscious thought and deliberate action.

Likewise, there were subtle differences in the ways different occupational groups encountered and conceptualised globalisation. Employees and students only addressed globalisation in general terms, and I was unable to identify any recurrent themes in their accounts. However, farmers' accounts of globalisation focused primarily on commodity imports and exports and so-called 'free-trade' issues. Teachers focused primarily on the use of global communications technologies to enhance the learning experience. Public servants concentrated on learning from other countries how to improve local communities, while protecting their communities from the perceived ill effects of immigration and cross-cultural conflict. Many retirees focused on the perceived

disintegrating effects of globalising social changes. And business owners concentrated on the issues specific to their enterprises: imports of the technology or materials they require; ways to serve an increasingly diverse clientele; ways to exploit new technologies to increase sales; and ways to remain financially viable small businesses in the face of global competition.

Such differences suggest that people in different occupational groups are attuned to different aspects of globalisation, those aspects which most profoundly affect their economic well-being. However, it should be noted that there was a great diversity of responses to globalisation within each of these groups. In all of the occupational groups, there were individuals who disapproved of globalising changes and individuals who approved of them, individuals who embraced them and individuals who resisted them. Furthermore, it was not uncommon for a single individual to express shifting and, at times, contradictory responses to globalisation.

Both Australian and Japanese accounts of globalisation are characterised by a high degree of ambivalence about globalising social changes. Such ambivalence is seen most clearly in focus group discussions in which participants negotiated meanings and responses to globalisation to reach a provisional consensus on the social transformations they had experienced. In order to show these constantly shifting understandings and responses to globalisation, I will quote at some length a group of Australian public servants:

Audrey: The thing about globalisation is that to me it means 'American.' . . . The Coke and McDonalds stuff just gives me the shits, because it's so in-your-face, and . . . so much money is spent on infiltration. . . . Everywhere. Beijing! I went to Beijing, and there's people queued up outside McDonalds!

Denise: So it's obviously working!

Robyn: But why, why? I don't like the food, and that's about the only thing I don't like about them, but if they've got a successful business and their business is employing the people in those areas . . . what is significantly wrong with it?

- Audrey: What I find significantly wrong with it is--to me it's just watering down--I do think that once you start to water things down and make McDonalds a global thing, it means the West--the culture of the West--is generally American. . . . And that gives me the shits.
- Denise: But it's not just the West that's affected by it.
- Audrey: No, you're right. . . . The whole world is being affected by this American-ness. And it just means that eventually you get to the point where there's no variety and--it's just one--I don't know, it's the lowest common denominator stuff, I suppose.
- Robyn: I was just going to get off McDonalds as such, but still on the food issue. And food has helped globalisation as far as we're concerned. Because you look up the North Hobart street where you've got all these different eating establishments, and they're great. Italian.
- Denise: Oh we love that!
- Audrey: Wouldn't you say that's more multiculturalism than globalisation? Because it's not a company becoming multinational. It's multiculturalism. I see it as different.
- Denise: I'm inclined to think [globalisation is] a sort of a blending. There's going to be no differences. . . . It's going to be like this one culture.
- Robyn: I see globalisation . . . as opening the world up to everyone through the Internet and communications. . . . I see it more as an access thing. With globalisation . . . you've got the ability to fly to England. . . . You've got the ability to see other areas instead of just the back doorstep. And that's what I see as globalisation. . . . And because of that, I think . . . that you're going to get all of the mixing so that there'll be . . . assimilation [of] different cultures . . . rather than maintaining your individualities.
- Audrey: [Robyn is] looking at a more broad-based perspective. . . . What I was saying is more of a reaction against American-ness I think. And I know a lot of people that feel the same way. I think it's a general reaction from the whole area. . . . So perhaps that's a reaction more against American-ness than globalisation as a concept.



Lynette: Yeah, I agree with parts of what you both said. Globalisation. . . . I mean it's *all* about globalisation. And, [Audrey], when you spoke, I agreed totally with what you said. And when [Robyn] spoke, I thought, 'Oh yeah, technology is very important.'

Audrey: And I changed *my* mind too! [laughing]

Lynette: You see [Robyn] came up with a positive side, whereas we just thought--

Audrey: 'America's taking over! Oh God!'

This extended passage shows that within a group of individuals of the same sex, occupation and generation, there are diverse understandings of and responses to globalisation. In this exchange, participants associate globalisation with economic and technological opportunities (job creation and access to transportation and information technologies), and with both cultural diversification (increasing multiculturalism), and the decline of cultural diversity (the Americanisation of world cultures). The discussion neatly demonstrates the instability of the concept of globalisation, as well as the many different ways participants encounter the global in their everyday lives, and the flexibility with which they respond to the globalising social transformations they are experiencing. Not only do these participants actively interpret and reinterpret globalising processes in light of changing contexts, they also explicitly reflect on the malleability of these interpretations.

### National Identity and Globalisation

In discussions of the social changes associated with globalisation, Australian and Japanese participants in a wide range of social locations noted the potential for globalisation to destabilise national identity. Such accounts suggest that participants for the most part did not share my conceptualisation of the discursivity of national identities. Rather, most conceptualised national identity as a relatively stable national 'character' inherited from past generations, and yet still responsive or vulnerable to social change.

In Australia, for example, older male farmers noted that, with ethnic diversification of the population, it is now harder to define or describe Australian identity, and that globalisation is 'removing particular local identity.' Likewise, Ted, a public servant, noted that under globalisation, 'There's a potential for a loss of identity and the loss of local character.' Similarly, high school girls, male retirees, Lisa (a teacher), and Leanne (a business owner), suggested that, with intensifying globalisation, Australia is increasingly losing the cohesive national ethnic identity and culture perceived to have once existed.

Likewise, in Japan, Ms. Ueno, the senior teacher quoted at some length earlier, suggested that internationalisation (especially the global flow of information) is undermining the nation's long-standing 'island nation mentality' (*shima-guni konjoo*). Similarly, older male farmers suggested that internationalisation (particularly the liberalisation of global trade) is leading to a decline of Japanese ways of life; and Mr. Kuzume, the owner of a factory producing 'traditional' Japanese products, noted, 'When internationalised, there is a risk that we will lose the important culture of our race.'

Even while Australian and Japanese participants noted the general *potential* of globalisation to destabilise national identity, many participants suggested that their *particular* country's national identity is resilient enough to withstand the homogenising pressures of globalisation. In Australia, for instance, Paula, a teacher, explained that globalisation is changing Australian society in myriad ways. However, she added,

Whether it's changing our identity, I don't really think so, no. I think Australians are pretty proud of what we are and what we have made of the country. . . . And I guess I still see our identity as being fairly solid. . . . I have thought about that, about whether we are becoming so global we lose ourselves in it and forget who we are. But I don't think that will happen.

Similarly, Mr. Tsuya, a Japanese public servant, remarked, 'Even if the controls [on trade] are eased and the market is opened up to America and so on, we have our own culture and we wouldn't change our ways one hundred percent, because we have our own culture and customs which internationalisation won't change.' So, while Australian and Japanese participants voiced concerns over the possible loss of distinct national

characteristics in the face of globalisation, they also suggested that superficial changes to the nation's way of life do not pose a threat to its overarching national identity; they characterised their own nation's identity as resilient, enduring and resistant to the influences of globalisation.

At the same time, both Australian and Japanese participants incorporated changing social conditions into their visions of the imagined national community. This is seen most clearly in regards to changing gender roles in Australia and Japan, changes which many participants associated with globalisation. As detailed in this and the previous two chapters, shifting gender relations feature prominently in both Australian and Japanese folk discourses of national identity. In fact, such changes are an integral part of participants' narratives of nation, whether they use such changes to demonstrate the progressive nature of their respective countries, or to define a more 'authentic' or 'traditional' national identity in contrast to recent developments.

Similarly, in Australia at least, the nation's changing ethnic composition was a central theme in participants' narratives of nation. Again, such changes were used by some participants to construct the nation as a bastion of tolerance and progress, while other participants used such changes to reflect on the loss of an earlier, more authentic 'white' Australian identity. In Japan, participants incorporated ethnic Others into their narratives of nation in a slightly different way. While participants seldom suggested that ethnic Others should, or even could, become part of the imagined community (for instance, by migrating to Japan, becoming citizens and integrating with mainstream Japanese society), the theme of increasing inter-ethnic contact consistently surfaced in discussions of Japanese national identity. Many participants argued that only through understanding Other cultures and Other peoples could they truly understand what it means to be Japanese.

While Australian and Japanese participants clearly incorporated the changing gender and ethnic relations associated with globalisation into their imaginings of nation, there is little empirical evidence to suggest that globalisation is diminishing the salience of discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan. To the contrary, the evidence

presented in this thesis suggests that globalising social conditions are favourable to the generation of the kinds of gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity documented in the previous chapters.

In Australia, for instance, the recent Constitutional Preamble debate demonstrates that when faced with potentially significant socio-political changes, Australian politicians, the mass media and non-elites alike constructed strongly gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity. The draft Preamble(s) of 1999 discursively marginalised women and ethnic minorities, and in so doing reasserted masculine 'white' proprietorship of the nation. In Japan, participants suggested that advertisers consciously use nostalgic images of 'traditional' femininity and 'pure Japanese' (*junsui na Nihonjin*) to ease people's anxieties about the kinds of rapid social changes associated with globalisation. Such discursive constructions render women archaic and passive, and ethnic minorities invisible, thus reproducing both patriarchal ideology and the ideology of ethnic Japanese proprietorship of the nation. In both Japan and Australia, then, it appears that these kinds of gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity are perceived as antidotes to anxieties over rapid social changes, including those changes associated with globalisation.

Although some participants' accounts of globalisation echoed state and academic accounts of cultural homogenisation, economic and political domination, and the destabilisation or loss of national identity, there is little evidence that national identities have lost their salience under globalised social conditions in Australia and Japan. Participants still constructed confident and cohesive narratives of nation, accounts of what their respective nations are and are not. Globalisation does not 'destabilise' national identities, because national identities are inherently unstable, negotiated, constantly in flux. Globalisation does not render discourses of national identity irrelevant, because globalisation is, above all, about encounters with the Other—Other people, Other commodities, Other information, Other ways of life—both from beyond national borders (for example, foreigners and foreign ways), and within them (with internal Others including, for example, women, ethnic minorities and groups based on

marginalised sexual orientations). As social scientists from Cooley (the 'looking-glass self') to Said ('Orientalism') and beyond have argued, only through encounters with the Other can we define who we are, whether as individuals, as ethnic, religious or other social groups, or as nations. When the Other is encountered, the search for essential(ised) differences, for unique and definitive traits, begins, resulting in the generation of dichotomous classifications: us/them, male/female, 'white'/'coloured,' advanced/primitive and so on. Once such categories inform the national imaginary, they are only reinforced by further encounters with the Other, until imagined communities are largely constituted by images of 'us' and 'them.'

### Summary and Conclusions

I began this chapter with two goals: to examine the ways Australians and Japanese experience, understand and respond to globalisation; and to explore the links between globalisation and gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan.

Evidence offered above suggests that most Australian and Japanese participants are actively engaged in globalisation, as I have defined it, through their encounters with globalised flows of people, commodities, and information. Furthermore, participants in both national settings suggested that these encounters are profoundly changing their lives, from the foods they eat and the clothes they wear, to the ethnic composition of their neighbourhoods, the (declining) cohesiveness of their communities and families, and their ability to travel and communicate over ever greater distances. Some participants considered these changes to be ripe with possibilities and promise for a better future; others mourned the loss of familiar ways of life and looked to the future with apprehension.

There was little consensus among participants regarding the meaning or significance of globalisation in their everyday lives. That participants' discussions of globalisation in both Australia and Japan were characterised by such ambivalence and

flux is a reflection of the uneven and contradictory nature of globalisation itself and authorised and mass mediated accounts of globalising changes. The Janus-faced character of globalisation is evidenced in participants' perceptions of its attendant threats and promises, its opportunities and losses.

Finally, while there is evidence that participants accommodate changing social relations and material conditions in their narratives of nation, there is little evidence to suggest that national identities in Australia and Japan are losing their salience under increasing globalisation. To the contrary, the rapid social changes associated with globalisation appear to provide favourable conditions for the generation of discourses of national identity that marginalise women and ethnic minorities in the ways described in preceding chapters.

## CHAPTER EIGHT CONCLUSION

I began this thesis with three primary goals: to examine the ways gendered and ethnicised national identities are constituted in Australia and Japan; to analyse the ways such discourses reflect, reproduce and challenge social inequalities based on gender and ethnicity in these two settings; and to explore the ways globalisation is related to discursive constructions of national identity in Australia and Japan. In this chapter I will recapitulate my empirical findings and discuss the contribution this thesis makes to an understanding of national identities in the context of globalisation.

### Summary of Empirical Findings

#### *Gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan*

I have argued in this thesis that nations are more than a combination of geographical territories, human populations and social institutions. To borrow Anderson's (1983) term, nations are 'imagined communities.' They are 'imagined,' or symbolically constructed, through overlapping authorised, mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity. I have demonstrated in this thesis that in Australia and Japan these discourses of national identity are gendered and ethnicised in complex ways.

In Chapter Three I reviewed state and academic discourses of national identity in these two national settings. I argued that, historically, authorised discourses have constructed Australia as largely 'white' and masculine, but that such constructions are not static or monolithic. Rather, widely circulating 'white' masculine discourses of Australianness are challenged by counter-narratives of nation. Recent debates over the inclusion of references to 'mateship' and aboriginal 'custodianship' of Australian lands in the proposed Preamble to the Australian Constitution suggest that as the roles and statuses of women and ethnic minorities shift over time, so do gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity. The eventual deletion of references to 'mateship' reflect the increased political voice of Australian women in recent decades; and while references to

aboriginal 'custodianship' were not included in the final draft Preamble, widespread and earnest debate on this issue signalled an increasing recognition of the rights and roles of indigenous Australians. Although ultimately the Australian electorate rejected the draft Preamble, the heated debate over the potential marginalisation of women and indigenous peoples in a Constitutional Preamble suggests that gender and ethnicity continue to be central to narratives of nation in Australia.

My analysis of authorised discourses of national identity revealed that in Japan such discourses are profoundly ethnicised and often at least implicitly gendered. Specifically, I argued that the *Nihonjinron*, discourses of Japanese uniqueness, hinge on the notion of Japanese ethnic homogeneity, even racial purity. Such discourses of homogeneity obscure the presence of ethnic Others in Japan, and thus make it possible for dominant social groups to ignore the material disadvantages facing indigenous peoples, the *Burakumin*, Korean and Chinese permanent residents of Japan and other marginalised groups in the nation. I also examined essentialised constructions of Japan and the West in the *Nihonjinron*, which contrast a feminine, emotional, receptive Japan with a masculine, rational, donative West. However, I stressed that Japanese narratives of nation are not somehow simply feminine; rather, depending on the context, discourses of Japanese national identity may emphasise either stereotypically feminine or stereotypically masculine traits. Significantly, however, in such discourses of national identity, women are consistently represented as domestic and 'traditional,' while men are constructed as public and dynamic.

In Chapter Four I analysed mass mediated discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan, and found evidence that these discourses are both gendered and ethnicised in ways that are largely consistent with authorised discourses. My content analysis of Australian and Japanese television advertisements demonstrated that in these mass mediated narratives of nation, Australianness is most often embodied by 'white' male characters; 'traditional' Japaneseness is most often embodied by 'Japanese' female characters; and 'contemporary' Japaneseness is generally embodied by 'Japanese' males.



Ethnic Others are largely invisible in mass mediated representations of national identity in both countries.

An analysis of audience responses to these mass mediated representations of national identity corroborated the conclusions from my content analysis. Australian participants rate advertisements with mostly 'white,' mostly male characters, as more 'Australian' than advertisements with mostly 'ethnic,' or mostly female characters. Similarly, Japanese participants rate nostalgic advertisements (usually peopled by female characters) as more 'Japanese' than advertisements with more contemporary images (more often featuring men), and advertisements showing ethnic Others are perceived as less 'Japanese' than advertisements showing only ethnically Japanese characters.

In Chapters Five and Six I examined folk discourses of national identity, those narratives of nation constructed by participants in Australian and Japanese focus groups and in-depth interviews. My analysis of the Australian data suggested that participants in all social locations, young and old, male and female, of a variety of occupational backgrounds, construct similarly gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity. In participants' discussions of the national character and national archetypes, social relations and social ethics, everyday practice, material and symbolic culture, and the environment, 'white,' male pursuits and personae are privileged over female or ethnic Other figures and experiences. In folk discourses of Australian identity, women frequently fade from view while ethnic Others are positioned as threats to the national social order. However, such widely circulating discourses of national identity do not go unchallenged. A broad cross-section of participants note that such discourses are merely a collection of clichés from a national mythos which largely excludes women and ethnic Others. Additionally, a smaller subsection of participants, principally those who are marginalised in such discourses by virtue of their gender, ethnicity or other social characteristics, actively deconstruct and reinvent such narratives of nation to claim a place for themselves in the national imagined community.

My analysis of the Japanese data revealed that folk discourses of national identity resonate strongly with notions of racial/ethnic homogeneity. Participants explain the

‘unique’ Japanese character, modes of social organisation, customs, language, and material culture as consequences of the nation’s geographic, cultural and genetic isolation. Japan’s internal ethnic Others, the *Ainu* and *Ryuukyu* peoples, the *Burakumin*, and Korean and Chinese permanent residents, rarely appear in folk narratives of nation to challenge apparent racial/ethnic uniformity. External Others, principally those from ‘the West’ or elsewhere in Asia, appear as essentialised alters who serve to further confirm the distinctiveness of Japan and the Japanese.

As well as being ethnicised, Japanese folk discourses of national identity are gendered. These discourses of Japanese identity are not straightforwardly gendered in the masculine, as in Australia, nor in the feminine; rather, participants draw on both masculine and feminine imagery in their narratives of nation. However, such imagery clearly reflects a gender binary in which women are positioned as domestic, ‘traditional’ and passive, and men as public, progressive and active. All but the youngest research participants suggest that Japanese society is characterised by patriarchal social relations, that it is a ‘man’s world,’ a ‘salaryman society,’ a ‘sexist society.’ While many (usually older, usually male) participants speak of this national gender order with resignation or even tacit approval, other (usually younger, usually female) participants actively challenge it. Likewise, it is primarily female participants who contest widely circulating gendered and ethnicised discourses of Japanese identity. This suggests that those individuals who, by virtue of certain ascribed characteristics, are marginalised, essentialised or rendered archaic in discourses of national identity, are more likely to challenge such discourses in an attempt to insert themselves into the national imaginary.

### *Discursive and material effects*

In this thesis I have examined the ways gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity reflect, reinforce and challenge the material marginalisation of women and ethnic minorities in Australia and Japan. The widely circulating gendered and ethnicised discourses of Australian and Japanese identity documented throughout this thesis marginalise women and ethnic minorities by rendering them irrelevant, archaic or

virtually invisible. At the same time, however, the counter-narratives of national identity constructed by participants contest this marginalisation.

In Chapter Five I argued that notions of egalitarianism, which feature so prominently in folk discourses of Australian identity, help legitimate the subordination of women and ethnic Others. If Australian society is seen as a meritocracy in which all people compete on an equal footing, then the lower social position of certain individuals or groups can be attributed to their inferior abilities or motivation. Such an explanation implies that those in power achieved their privileged positions purely through their own superior abilities. Likewise, it implies that those in subordinate positions are there due to their own personal failings, but that they too may reach privileged positions if they work hard enough.

Similarly in Japan the discourse of racial/ethnic homogeneity obscures the presence of ethnic Others and the disadvantages they face. As I argued in Chapter Six, this notion of homogeneity serves the interests of dominant social groups because if the nation is imagined to be a naturally evolved organic whole then current social hierarchies will likely be constructed as 'natural' and necessary. Likewise, participants use notions of biology (the naturally evolved characteristics of men and women and of the Japanese 'race') to explain and even legitimate patriarchal power relations in Japan, and to explain the necessity of excluding foreign Others from full participation in the national imagined community.

Moreover, both Australian and Japanese participants use gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity in the process of making sense of their location within the imagined community. Some (usually relatively privileged) participants construct narratives of nation that centre on their own experiences: Australian businessmen suggest, for example, that the 'real' Australian is 'the working man,' while older male farmers in Japan suggest that the rural way of life is quintessentially Japanese. However, many participants from subordinated social groups explain their own marginality with reference to gendered and ethnicised narratives of nation. An Australian migrant from southern Europe, for example, constructs a largely 'white,' rural, Anglo-centric narrative

of the nation, far removed from his life as an ethnic Other who has lived in several large Australian cities; and a Japanese female public servant describes in detail the 'typical Japanese,' and then notes that she herself is not like this. In both of these instances, individuals from subordinated social groups construct discourses of national identity from which they themselves are excluded, stories which mirror their own marginalisation within the national community.

*Globalisation and gendered and ethnicised national identities*

The final goal of this thesis was to explore the way globalisation is related to gendered and ethnicised national identities in Australia and Japan. In Chapter Seven I argued that there is little empirical evidence that globalisation has rendered Australian and Japanese national identities obsolete; to the contrary, globalised social conditions appear to be conducive to the construction of gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity.

While Australian and Japanese participants in all social locations report a high level of engagement with globalisation in their everyday lives, there is no consensus among participants regarding the scope and the consequences of globalisation. Participants' accounts of globalisation are characterised by ambivalence and constant renegotiation. These shifting, even contradictory, accounts of globalisation reflect the contradictory nature of globalisation. The outcomes of globalisation are diverse and uneven. Depending upon the particular context globalisation may lead to innovation and change or to a search for 'authenticity' or 'tradition;' it may lead to increased opportunities for some people and increased exploitation for others.

Some participants suggest that globalising changes threaten long-standing, cherished ways of life, while others argue that globalisation opens up new economic, political and personal opportunities. Likewise, while some participants suggest that, as a general principle, globalisation threatens global cultural diversity and the distinctive national traits seen as central to national identities, most also note with confidence that national identities in their respective nations are strong enough to withstand the homogenising force of globalisation.

Furthermore, participants suggest that globalisation affects people in different social locations differently. Teachers in Australia, for instance, argue that globalisation has class and spatial dimensions, in that only wealthier and largely urban Australians are able to capitalise on the economic and cultural opportunities associated with globalisation. Australian participants also note that globalisation affects men and women differently. Participants report that, in Plainsview at least, global economic restructuring is forcing men out of work. These participants suggest that while women's job opportunities and public visibility have expanded somewhat, women are increasingly the targets of violence by the men who are displaced and threatened by such changes. Finally, in Australian transcript data, globalisation has a clear ethnic/racial dimension. Ethnic Others, particularly migrant Others, are constructed as the bearers of globalising social changes, both positive and negative. They are welcomed for the pleasurable diversity of commodities and customs they bring to the country, and at the same time feared and criticised for the crime and wider social disorder they are said to introduce to Australian society.

Likewise, Japanese participants suggest that globalisation has spatial, gender and ethnic/racial dimensions. A broad cross-section of participants argue that globalisation is most rapid in the nation's urban areas, particularly those on the mainland of Honshu. Moreover, they suggest that in Japan, women stand to benefit more than men from globalisation, because globalisation is likely to bring greater gender equality to the nation. As in Australia, ethnic Others are constructed as the bearers of globalisation. While foreign ethnic Others (especially 'whites') are welcomed both for their novelty value and for the new perspectives they bring to the nation, intermarriage with them is identified as a potential cause of social disintegration, specifically of 'racial problems.' Internal ethnic Others, such as indigenous peoples, the *Burakumin* and Korean and Chinese residents of Japan, are rarely mentioned in discussions of globalisation. These internal Others are obscured by the discourse of Japanese ethnic homogeneity.

### Contributions to the Understanding of National Identities

In this thesis I have made both empirical and theoretical contributions to a fuller understanding of national identities in the context of globalisation. Having reviewed my empirical findings above, I conclude here by revisiting the theoretical issues I raised at the start of the thesis.

#### *Imbricated discourses of national identity*

I have argued that the social scientific literature to date has lacked rich, explicit and consistently applied definitions of national identity. On the one hand, national identity has been conceptualised as the natural 'essence' of a nation's land, people and ways of life: a conceptualisation that over-stabilises and naturalises what are shifting narratives located within specific relations of power. On the other hand, national identity has been defined as individuals' affective attachments to national, or even sub-national, social groups: a definition that fails to account for the mutual construction of these collective identities. One of my key contributions in this thesis is my treatment of national identities as discourses (specifically sets of imbricated authorised, mass mediated and folk discourses) of national belonging, which are malleable, inherently unstable and collectively constructed.

I have demonstrated here that there is significant overlap between authorised, mass mediated and folk discourses of national identity, and yet there are prominent differences between them. This has two implications for future analyses of national identities. First, it suggests that national identity is not simply a top-down construct, invented by powerful elites to serve their interests. Active contestations and the construction of counter-narratives by participants suggest that even widely circulating authorised and mass mediated discourses of national identity are never totalising constructions.

Second, it demonstrates the importance of analysing multiple sites of the construction of national identities. That is, while scholars of national identity to date

have concentrated their analyses largely on a limited range of textual materials, such as novels, official histories or government documents, my work here suggests that for a fuller understanding of national identity it is essential to analyse the way a multitude of discourses compete with, transform and/or reinforce one another. In addition, it is essential to examine not only textual products, but also discursive processes. For ultimately, discourses have no life of their own; they only have effects as they are created, employed, embraced or resisted by individuals.

It is also worth reiterating that the boundaries between authorised, mass mediated and folk discourses are not always clear. Not only are there thematic overlaps between them, but some participants, such as teachers and public servants, are themselves agents of the implementation of government policies. As such participants construct discourses of national identity, the analytical distinction between folk and authorised accounts is blurred, highlighting the necessity of analysing the ways national identities are negotiated in a variety of social contexts.

### *Globalisation and national identities*

A second contribution I have made to the scholarship on national identities lies in my examination of the complex relationship between globalisation and national identity. My explication of the discursivity of national identities exposes the flawed logic of theorists who suggest that globalisation is undermining or destabilising national identities worldwide. That is, it is meaningless to theorise about the destabilisation or de-centring of national identities when these identities are inherently unstable and without unified 'centres.'

Additionally, the empirical evidence I have presented here suggests that in a context of increasing globalisation Australians and Japanese actively construct narratives of nation in ways that reflect and help explain their own locations within their national imagined communities. That discourses of national identity are used by participants to explain their own place in the national (and/or international) social order suggests that such discourses retain their salience in the face of globalising social changes.

Such conclusions confirm Robertson's (1992, 1995) thesis that the global and the local (or the national in this case) are mutually constitutive; the global shapes the local, even as the local shapes the global. The incorporation of the global by the local/national is highlighted by the treatment of foreigners, recent migrants and ethnic minorities in Australian and Japanese discourses of national identity. In both national contexts these Others are positioned as alters against whom the national Self is defined. This suggests that discourses of national identity are always already constructions of 'foreign' Others; therefore they are also inherently discourses of globalisation.

*'Marginality' as an analytical category*

In a third contribution to an understanding of national identities, I have demonstrated here that the concept of 'marginality' may serve as a useful analytical category in research on national identity. A sense of marginality pervades both Australian and Japanese folk discourses of national identity at three levels: at the level of the nation's location within the world; at the level of the local region's location within the nation; and at the level of the individual's location within the nation.

In both national settings, for example, participants explain purported features of the national character with reference to national geographic isolation. Specifically, both Australians and Japanese argue that their respective nations are characterised by a national chauvinism (sometimes identified as 'racism' or '*jinshu henken*') that is the natural consequence of being 'island nations.' Participants explain that not sharing land borders with other nations has had two primary effects on the national character: it has meant that the national character has developed without much influence from the outside; and it has meant that people of the nation are largely unfamiliar with, and therefore suspicious of, foreign Others. In the first of these, geographic marginality is used to support claims of national cultural uniqueness; in the second, it is used to account for, or even legitimate the symbolic and/or material exclusion of foreign Others from the national imagined community.



Similarly, participants in both Tasmania and Hokkaido stress the geographic, political and economic marginality of their local region. Participants report that their region is struggling economically; is losing young people to mainland population centres; lags behind the rest of the nation in terms of popular culture, fashion and other trends; and is regarded by 'mainlanders' as backward. At the same time, however, participants in Tasmania and Hokkaido turn their region's marginality into a source of pride, by arguing that their communities have existed relatively unchanged for generations; are insulated from the effects of globalisation; and therefore are more 'traditional,' more 'authentically' Australian or Japanese than the cities at the 'centre' of their respective nations. In other words, in both Tasmania and Hokkaido, participants use the trope of rural marginality to symbolically place themselves at the centre of the national imagined community, to write themselves in to discourses of national identity.

It must be noted that while there are striking similarities between the Australian and Japanese tropes of rural and 'island nation' marginality in discourses of national identity, these may not be more universal tropes in the construction of national identities. Due to geo-political realities, most nations worldwide do not have the luxury of imagining themselves to be geographically and culturally isolated; therefore the 'island nation' trope cannot be understood as a more universal feature of discourses of national identity. Moreover, further research is needed to determine whether people in a range of national and local contexts associate rurality with more 'authentic' forms of national identity. To this end, research focusing on both urban and rural populations in a variety of locations within Australia and Japan would provide insight into the ways individuals incorporate their respective localities into visions of the national imagined community.

The concept of 'marginality' is also analytically useful in understanding the ways participants position themselves relative to authorised and mass mediated discourses of national identity. Specifically, my analysis of folk constructions of national identity suggests that Australians and Japanese who are marginalised within the national imagined community are more likely than others to contest widely circulating discourses of national identity. Most prominently, many women in both Australia and Japan spoke out against

their material subordination relative to men, and their symbolic marginalisation in discourses of national identity. Nonetheless, many of these women also framed their own material marginalisation within the same exclusionary discourses they critiqued. In this way, marginality served as a trope to explain, even naturalise, the subordination of women in these two national settings.

This highlights the material effects of discourses of national identity. Throughout the thesis I have sought to understand the ways such discourses mirror and reinforce the marginalisation of women and ethnic minorities by naturalising their subordination. Few ethnic minority individuals live in the communities I studied, and therefore I do not have sufficient data to draw conclusions regarding the way such Others position themselves vis-à-vis discourses of national identity. However, based on the comments of Australian and Japanese women, and at least one ethnic minority Australian man, I would anticipate that research focusing on ethnic minorities in these two nations would find similar patterns of resisting, critiquing and appropriating widely circulating discourses of national identity.

### *Cross-national comparison*

I have made further contributions to the scholarship on national identity through my use of cross-national comparisons. Analysing discourses of national identity in closely matched communities in Australia and Japan has allowed me to identify both national specificities and seemingly more general trends in the construction of national identities.

### Feminist and postcolonialist understandings of national identity

First, my comparison of constructions of national identity in Australia and Japan generally reconfirms the findings of feminist and postcolonialist scholars who suggest that in contemporary nation-states women and ethnic minorities are symbolically marginalised in ways that mirror and reinforce these groups' material subordination. However, my findings do not wholly support McClintock's assertions that women generally serve as the 'symbolic bearers of the nation' and are represented as largely

'traditional,' antiquated and passive (McClintock 1993: 62, 66). My analysis of the Japanese data suggests that national identity may be feminised or masculinised depending on the discursive context. This is consistent with Morris-Suzuki's argument that in Japanese narratives of nation 'notions of femininity and masculinity have been deployed and combined in various ways to create visions of the nation which suited particular historical and political contexts' (Morris-Suzuki 1998: 135). My analysis of the Australian data demonstrates that in this national context it is not women but men who are associated with 'tradition,' with past values and ways of life. These data from Japan and Australia have important implications for future scholarship on the marginalisation of women within discourses of national identity. The data suggest that it is crucial to examine the subtleties of such gendered discourses in each national context, rather than formulating theoretical generalisations which do not account for local understandings of such discourses.

My findings lend support to Hage's (1998) argument that Australian narratives of nation are ethnicised in ways that naturalise and reinforce the dominance of the 'white' majority. I have incorporated elements of Hage's argument into a feminist and cross-national analytical framework to examine the ideologies of patriarchy and ethnic proprietorship in both Australia and Japan. I concluded that widely circulating discourses of national identity are inscribed with, and reinscribe, patriarchal ideology in both national settings, and the ideologies of 'white' proprietorship in Australia and ethnic Japanese proprietorship in Japan, the taken-for-granted notions that 'whites' and ethnic Japanese are the rightful owners and governors of their respective countries. Such cross-national similarities suggest that these may be more general features of constructions of national identity worldwide.

#### The applicability of globalisation theories to 'non-Western' contexts

Second, my comparison of Australia and Japan has allowed me to examine whether Western explanations of the dynamics of globalisation are equally applicable to a 'non-Western' context. Admittedly, the concepts of 'East' and 'West' are problematic, both

because they essentialise and totalise culturally diverse regions, and because Japan itself has an economic and political profile that sets it apart from the rest of the 'East' in many ways. That said, I did find slightly different national responses to globalisation in the form of Australian multiculturalism and Japanese internationalisation. While Australian multiculturalist discourses focus largely on managing national ethnic diversity, Japanese internationalisation focuses primarily on forging political, economic and cultural alliances across national borders. Furthermore, I found that within each national setting, individuals in different social locations experienced and perceived globalisation in different ways.

Both of these findings are consistent with the theoretical position I developed in Chapter Three: that is, although globalisation is demonstrably transforming political, economic and cultural relations worldwide, its effects are neither unidirectional nor uniform. These findings also support Robertson's (1992, 1995) conceptualisation of globalisation as an articulation of the global and the local; and they challenge suggestions that globalisation leads inevitably toward the homogenisation of cultures and identities worldwide.

#### Future Research

The empirical data analysed in this thesis provide a rich understanding of gendered and ethnicised discourses of national identity in Australia and Japan, and the ways such discourses mirror, maintain and challenge the subordination of women and ethnic minorities in these two contexts. The findings reported here suggest the importance of examining the ways other marginalised social groups are positioned relative to discourses of national identity. Further research is needed to test whether the discursive processes examined here apply to groups marginalised (materially and symbolically) on the basis of class, sexual orientation, disability or other characteristics.

Furthermore, one strength of the kind of qualitative research presented in this thesis is that it yields a nuanced account of constructions of national identity in specific communities at specific points in time. I sampled a broad cross-section of the population

in the communities I studied in order to better understand the ways participants' social locations shaped their constructions of national identity. However, a systematic examination of the material conditions within which discourses of national identity were generated was beyond the scope of this project. Therefore, further research is required to chart the ways people's constructions of discourses of national identity vary with the specific material conditions of their social locations, and the ways such constructions vary between geographical locations and over time in Australia and Japan.

To conclude, in addition to the detailed empirical data I have presented here, I have contributed to a fuller understanding of gendered and ethnicised national identities in the context of globalisation in four key ways: I have analysed both the discursive products and discursive processes of constructions of national identity and investigated the multiple levels and sites of these discursive constructions; I have scrutinised the links between globalisation and discourses of national identity; I have examined the complexities of 'marginality' in negotiations of national identity; and I have presented cross-national comparisons designed to better reveal both national specificities and more general trends in the construction of national identities. This analytical framework provides a useful model for future scholarship on national identities.

APPENDIX ONE  
DRAFT PREAMBLE TO THE AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTION

On 23 March, 1999, Prime Minister John Howard released the following proposed

Preamble to the Australian Constitution:

With hope in God, the Commonwealth of Australia is constituted by the equal sovereignty of all its citizens.

The Australian nation is woven together of people from many ancestries and arrivals.

Our vast island continent has helped to shape the destiny of our Commonwealth and the spirit of its people.

Since time immemorial our land has been inhabited by Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, who are honoured for their ancient and continuing cultures.

In every generation immigrants have brought great enrichment to our nation's life.

Australians are free to be proud of their country and heritage, free to realise themselves as individuals, and free to pursue their hopes and ideals. We value excellence as well as fairness, independence as dearly as mateship.

Australia's democratic and federal system of government exists under law to preserve and protect all Australians in an equal dignity which may never be infringed by prejudice or fashion or ideology nor invoked against achievement.

In this spirit we, the Australian people, commit ourselves to this Constitution.

APPENDIX TWO  
REVISED DRAFT PREAMBLE TO THE AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTION

On 11 August, 1999, Prime Minister John Howard released a revised version of a proposed Preamble to the Australian Constitution. It read, as follows:

We the Australian people commit ourselves to the Constitution: proud that our national unity has been forged by Australians from many ancestries; never forgetting the sacrifices of all who defended our country and our liberty in time of war; upholding freedom, tolerance, individual dignity and the rule of law; honouring Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, the nation's first people, for their deep kinship with their lands and for their ancient and continuing cultures which enrich the life of our country; recognising the nation-building contribution of generations of immigrants; mindful of our responsibility to protect our unique natural environment; supportive of achievement as well as equality of opportunity for all; and valuing independence as dearly as the national spirit which binds us together in both adversity and success.

**APPENDIX THREE**  
**DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENTS SHOWN TO AUSTRALIAN AND**  
**JAPANESE FOCUS GROUPS**

Australian and Japanese focus groups were shown thirteen television advertisements from their respective countries. Below is a list these advertisements, in the order in which they were shown to participants, along with the key characteristics of these advertisements.

**Australian Television Advertisements**

Order shown	Advertisement 'type'	Product advertised	Principal characters	Summary of advertisement
1	Nostalgic-serious	'Solver' paint	'White' men and women	A Banjo Paterson-style poem about the product is read by a male voice, as people are shown using 'Solver' paint in (mainly rural) Australian settings.
2	Nostalgic-serious	Cricket video	'White' men	Still black and white photos of Don Bradman and his cricket team are shown while 'Waltzing Matilda' plays in background.
3	Nostalgic-humorous	'Cottees Cordial' soft drink	'White' woman and (male) child	An overheated school boy makes his way home through a cartoon Australian landscape, while his mother waits in their ice-cold house to serve him 'Cottees Cordial.'
4	Neutral	'Ford' automobiles	'White' men and women, 'Asian' man	Shots of physically active young men and women are alternated with shots of Ford automobiles.
5	Contemporary leisure	'Pert' shampoo	'White' woman	A young woman prepares for a date after exercising at a health club.
6	Contemporary leisure	'Nutri-grain' breakfast cereal	'White' man	A surf 'iron man' competes impressively, after eating 'Nutrigrain' cereal.



Order shown	Advertisement 'type'	Product advertised	Principal characters	Summary of advertisement
7	Multi-culturalism	'Kantong' Thai curry sauce	'Asian' woman and (female) child	A 'Thai' mother (speaking in Thai) teaches her daughter how to make curry from fresh ingredients.
8	Contemporary leisure	'Carlton Cold' beer	'White' men	Two male customers and a male publican watch with amusement as a bird tries to drink a bottle of beer.
9	Nostalgic-serious	'Australia Post' books	'White' woman and (male and female) children	Soft-focus close-ups of a mother at home with her children, teaching them to read.
10	Humorous mixture of old and new	Lamb	'White' men and women, 'Indian' man, (male and female) children of an ethnically 'mixed' couple	A family sits down to Sunday dinner, and a father feigns offence at the 'tandoori lamb.' But the camera pulls back to show his 'white' daughter's 'Indian' husband and 'mixed' children. Everyone laughs.
11	Changing social roles	'Maggi' gravy mix	'White' man and woman	A young man thinks about what he will make his girlfriend for dinner.
12	Nostalgic-humorous	'Tank World' aluminium tanks	'White' man	Filmed in black and white, a farmer in shorts, a singlet, boots and an Akubra, battles to plug up holes in his old water tank. Then, switching to colour, a new tank is delivered.
13	Multi-culturalism	'National Australia Bank'	'Asian' men and women, 'Asian' (female) child	An 'Asian-Australian' father works in the family restaurant and is comforted by his daughter when he drops a dish.

## Japanese Television Advertisements

Order shown	Advertisement 'type'	Product advertised	Principal characters	Summary of advertisement
1	Nostalgic-humorous	'Maalox' liquid antacid	'Japanese' woman	A woman in <i>kimono</i> seems to be a tea ceremony teacher, but she serves her business-suited 'students' antacid instead of tea.
2	Changing social roles	'Toire kuikuru' toilet cleaner	'Japanese' man and woman	A man asks his wife to clean the toilet, but then enjoys cleaning the toilet himself with a new quick-wipe.
3	Humorous mix of old and new	'Seiryuu-sabou' canned tea	'Japanese' men	Two men in <i>yukata</i> drink canned tea, the younger man agreeing with everything the older man says.
4	Internationalisation	'Suzuran An' (sweet bean jam)	'White' woman, 'Japanese' (female) children	A foreign female teacher teaches English to Japanese girls. They mispronounce her name, Anne, as 'An.'
5	Nostalgic-serious	'Miyabun' knives	'Japanese' man	A male artisan in <i>kimono</i> studies a hand-crafted knife in a <i>tatami</i> room.
6	Contemporary leisure	'Touya paaku hoteru' (hotel)	'Japanese' woman	A young woman in <i>yukata</i> drinks a beer alone in the hotel lounge.
7	Nostalgic-serious	'Noguchi Kankou' (travel agency)	'Japanese' woman	A woman in <i>kimono</i> invites us to view a variety of scenes, with images including cherry blossoms, a Japanese kite and a hand-held paper fan ( <i>uchiwa</i> ).
8	Internationalisation	'Sprite' soft drink	'Japanese' men	Two 'Japanese' teenage boys 'rap' about Sprite, as a crowd of 'Japanese' and 'white' teenagers watch.
9	Nostalgic-humorous	'Nissin donburi' noodles	'Japanese' man	A <i>samurai</i> charges through a deserted street with sword drawn, in search of instant noodles.

Order shown	Advertisement 'type'	Product advertised	Principal characters	Summary of advertisement
10	Contemporary leisure	'Sapporo' beer	'Japanese' man and woman	A man practises his golf swing at a driving range while a woman looks on; then he drinks a beer.
11	Neutral	'Panshiron' antacid tablets	'Japanese' men and women	Men and women at a business meeting have upset stomachs. One of the women offers her colleagues antacid tablets.
12	Humorous mixture of old and new	'Benibana' salad oil	'Japanese' women	Three women sing and dance as they deliver mid-summer gifts, but they mistakenly visit the wrong house.
13	Changing social roles	'Lotte' gum	'Japanese' man and woman	When a male boss orders a female employee to take out the garbage, she fantasises about throwing him out along with the rubbish.

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